No. DS48.H15

V.1



GIVEN BY

Rev. Caleb D. Bradlee

LETTERS

FROM

THE OLD WORLD.

BY

3580.108
HAIGHT, MRS. SARAH (RIVERS) V.1

A LADY OF NEW-YORK.

"Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine?
* * * * * *
'Tis the clime of the East, 'tis the land of the Sun."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

NEW-YORK:

HARPER & BROTHERS, 82 CLIFF-STREET.

1840.

DS48
.H15
Vol. 1
237,027

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1839, by
HARPER & BROTHERS,
In the Clerk's Office of the Southern District of New-York.

PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

THE publishers have the pleasure of announcing that the volumes now offered will be succeeded at an early day by two more, containing the letters written by the same author during her travels in Northern, Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe, some of which, as also a portion of those now published, have appeared within the present year in the columns of the New-York American, and been copied thence into several other journals.

In the order of time, the following letters ought properly to be entitled the *second* series; but it was supposed that their publication as the *first* would gratify many readers who had followed the progress of the author, so far as it was described in the letters communicated to the journal above named, and who would naturally wish for the continuation; while to others it could make no difference whether they first took up the author's earlier or later journeys.

The publishers confidently anticipate for the letters in their present form a reception from the public not less cordial than that which was bestowed upon a portion of them when they appeared weekly in the columns of a newspaper.

New-York, December, 1839.

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AUTHOR'S NOTICE TO THE READER.

It was with extreme reluctance that the author of the following letters consented, in the first instance, that they should appear before the public, even in the columns of a newspaper; but she found herself obliged to yield to the earnest solicitations of her friends, and permit their publication; and it was only after ascertaining that an unauthorized reprint was contemplated, which would be sent forth to the world with all the errors, omissions, and imperfections incident to a newspaper publication, that her consent was obtained to the appearance of the present volumes.

In yielding consent to the publication of her letters in any form, she claims the indulgence of her friends and the public for the many inaccuracies with which they abound, and which, it will be evident to every one, must be incident to the peculiar circumstances under which they were written.

Should these pages conduce to the amusement or instruction of the reader, she trusts that the *matter* they contain may be a sufficient apology for such defects of *style* as may be noticed.

Nothing was more foreign to her expectations or wishes than the notoriety which the solicitations of her friends have thus brought upon her; and neither ambition of authorship nor pecuniary motives had any influence with her; on the contrary, lest her motives might be mistaken or impugned, and either of these considerations be imputed to her, she for a long time withheld her consent to the publication.

New-York, December, 1839.

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LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Plague at Odessa.—Contagion.—Quarantine Regulations.—Lazaretto.—Precautions.—Embarcation.—Storm at Sea.—Lee Shore.—Escape.—Arrival.

Constantinople, ——.

I CAN readily conceive with what avidity you will seize upon these pages, headed as they are by a name which carries with it so many and such singular associations. But your impatience to arrive at this point cannot have exceeded my own, since the time when, at Vienna, six months ago, we were turned by circumstances from our purpose of penetrating immediately into the East. The extraordinary and pleasing excitement, however, under which I have constantly been, has, in a measure, served to control that impatience; and the pleasure and information derived from the many interesting objects that have passed before me while traversing Central, Northern, and Eastern Europe, have more than compensated me for the first disappointment. How far the hasty and unconnected lines which I have imposed on you from various points of my journey may have served to stay your craving appetite for sketches of Oriental wanderings, I cannot presume to say; but only hope that, like *caviare* before the feast, they may have been the means of whetting it to a keener edge. It will be impossible for my imperfect descriptive powers to mete out to you such a portion as you may expect, of the mental feast which I now begin to realize

is before me. The fragments which will reach you will, I fear, be but as the crumbs that fall from the table. In catering for your appetite among the multitudinous objects which present themselves to me, there will be doubtless many that will not meet your anticipations. While your discriminating taste will reject those, may the *matter* of what remains be an apology for the *manner* of their presentation.

I must crave your indulgence for not now carrying you at one bound from the shores of European Russia into the midst of this *Oriental* capital, and by a sudden *coup de main* endeavouring to captivate your fancy, and subdue your judgment with the weapons of enthusiasm. As heretofore, I prefer that the transition should be gradual, in order that the impressions you derive may be the more lasting; that is, such of them as may set in motion those chords which vibrate in unison with my own sensations. Let us, therefore, return to Odessa, and resume our itinerary.

When we left our hotel at Odessa to go on board the steamer Nicholai, bound for this place, a curious, and, to me, a very interesting scene ensued.

I had often heard of "*Quarantine regulations*," and had frequently been witness to the silly vexations of our Staten Island *soi-disant* "*Quarantine*;" but I had yet to learn the true nature of sanitory regulations, and to see the extreme precautions which are necessary, in order that the *practical* results may be commensurate with the immense amount of labour, delay, expense, and damage to property, privation and loss of time to individuals. With us in America, the *name* only of *quarantine* is known; we are as totally ignorant of the thing, as it practically exists in European countries, as we are of the civil polity of the inhabitants of Timbuctoo.

You may perhaps have heard how Odessa was for the first time visited by a dreadful plague, about the time of the late Russian and Turkish war, and that many thousands of the inhabitants were swept away by it, and the commerce of

that great *free port* for a while totally annihilated. Previous to that period, the citizens of that commercial emporium had not only submitted cheerfully to the rigorous quarantine enforcements of the Russian government, but were perfectly resigned to the sacrifices, pecuniary and personal, which those regulations imposed. They also went hand in hand with the authorities of the city, in all their efforts to keep at bay the ferocious monster which was continually prowling around their walls, seeking an unguarded point of assail. "The government" (*alias* Nicholai, the General Jackson of these regions) took "the responsibility" of breaking through all the sanitory regulations of the port, in defiance of his own laws and the moral duty which he owed his subjects. Driven from the seat of war by a violent eruption of the *plague*, he sailed from *Varna* for Odessa. On his way he had an almost miraculous escape from shipwreck; the frigate in which he was came near foundering in a tremendous gale, which nearly tore her to pieces. On his arrival in the port of Odessa, in despite of all laws, human and divine, he and his suite, with all their camp-followers and their filthy equipage, landed in the midst of that populous and then healthy city, without the slightest attempt at purification or precaution.

The consequence was, that the *plague* made its appearance immediately, and its results were horrible in the extreme.

The emperor might just as well have landed a few miles from the city, and, performing quarantine on the road, pursued his way towards Moscow, without at all communicating with Odessa. As there is such a diversity of opinion, and so much conflicting testimony, more or less worthy of belief, on this disputed question of infection and contagion, I cannot refrain from now relating to you a curious fact which happened at Odessa, and, from the high authority whence I derived my information, it is worthy of all credit, and you

may place implicit reliance on what I am about to relate to you.

Some time after the great plague there had ceased, vessels arrived from Turkey with it on board, and anchored at the Lazaretto. Frequently every soul on board died, leaving none to bury them. The directors of the quarantine employed certain individuals for that purpose, first causing them to take the following precautions: To anoint their bodies with oil, and envelop themselves in a sort of garment made to fit perfectly tight, and *sewed up* close in every part, with a mask for the face. The material of this garment was some substance known by long experience to be a *non-receiver*, and, consequently, a *non-conductor*, of the plague. Thus accoutred, they were covered with a thick coat of tar. In this way they worked among the victims of the disease, on board the filthy vessels which brought them, with the utmost impunity, and did not imbibe the least infection.

Matters went on in this way for some time, when at last two of these *employées* were taken down with the plague, to the astonishment of every one. An inquiry was immediately instituted into the cause. Their cerements were found to be intact, and no dereliction from duty or non-observance of precaution could for a time be proved upon them. But at last, when they saw they were about to die, they confessed that on board one vessel the captain, passengers, and crew had all died, and that, by the respectable appearance of some of the persons, they were induced to examine the bodies more particularly than they had previously done the skippers of the Greek and Turkish luggers which they had visited. In order the better to search their persons, they had *pulled off the clumsy tarred mittens*, which impeded the performance of their new speculation. The result was as I have already stated to you. This, I think, is a stumbling-block for *non-contagionists*.

As the subject of *Quarantines* here in the East is one

which so much concerns all travellers in these regions, you will not, of course, take it amiss if I entertain you somewhat in detail thereon. I am, however, saved the trouble of giving it to you in my own words, as I find this subject alluded to in a letter from my husband to a friend of his, from which I extract:

"I will now relate to you what came under my daily observation of the details of the Quarantine Port, where vessels and merchandise '*in contumacia*' remain until purified by time and disinfecting agents.

"First, when a vessel arrives in the offing, she takes in her sails, and waits for the barge of the 'captain of the port' to come alongside, which is done with the precaution, never omitted, of one person keeping the boat off with an oar, while another holds on to something with a boathook (a *rope* is never handed to, or taken from, a vessel until her precise character as to health is decided). Then the usual questions are put as to the place of destination, where she has touched, what vessels spoke or boarded, number of passengers and crew, whether any have died upon the voyage, and if any are now sick. All this is taken down in writing; and wo betide the captain who should be discovered making a false report. Then the ship's papers, letters, and passports are held over the side of the ship, and taken by a person in the boat with a pair of *long iron tongs*, and thrown into a tin box. The captain of the port then directs that the vessel shall come to anchor near the Quarantine until the 'Sanita' shall have decided upon her case.

"The boat takes the report and the box of papers and letters to the Health Office, where the latter are thrown into a *smoke-box*, a contrivance similar to that used by our milliners to bleach straw hats. It is a box with a sieve or wire network in the middle, and a vessel containing coals and disinfecting ingredients. *Paper* is considered the most

susceptible article, the most dangerous, and frequently the most fatal medium through which the plague is transmitted."

As the packet containing this letter will go by the way of Malta, you will have an opportunity of seeing its mutilated state, and of smelling the disagreeable odours which it will imbibe in the process of its fumigation. Some of my letters received in Odessa, coming via Smyrna, are pierced through with sundry holes, made by the stamp of the "*Sanita*" office. The intolerable smell of chloride of lime and the other nauseous impregnations have so tainted my portfolio as to make it quite offensive. If my future letters should continue as dull as their predecessors, and not improve or brighten up as I advance in the "land of the sun, the olive and vine," you must attribute their stupidity to the *mephitis* of the paper on which I am doomed hereafter to write.

"When the authorities have decided on the character of the vessel left 'in observation,' permission is given for her either to go into the *free port*, or to repair to the Lazaretto dock, there to be moored, in line with the other vessels '*in contumacia*,' for a greater or less number of days. The vessel then has the *yellow flag* hoisted at masthead, and two 'guardianos' put on board to watch day and night, that the vessel neither communicates with the others nor with the shore. The passengers go into apartments in the Lazaretto, the cargo is placed on board lighters by the crew, and the lighters are towed and tied to a buoy in the centre of the port by the same crew, who immediately retreat back on board the vessel, and then the labourers in the Lazaretto row out and tow the lighters to the quarantine stores, where their cargoes are unloaded for purification. The persons thus confined on board and in the Lazaretto are only permitted to communicate with their friends on shore at a certain place, called in the common *Lingua Franca* parlance, the '*Parlatorio*.' It is a long building, divided in the centre by a double row of close wooden railings, with a wire net over

them, so that not the smallest article can be transferred from a person inside to another outside and at liberty to go to the town. This mode of communication is permitted from sunrise to sunset. Private apartments are provided, where persons having secret communications to make may not be overheard by others. Inside of the Lazaretto, each separate party must have a 'guardiano,' who follows them everywhere during the day, brings them their meals from the *restaurateur*, and locks them up in their separate apartments at night. The steamers plying to and from Turkey are always in quarantine, never staying in port long enough to get '*pratique*.' The passengers are obliged to be put on board by the quarantine employées."

It was while waiting our turn to be embarked that we saw the "*modus operandi*" of purifying certain articles, and the manner of keeping separate infected merchandise from that which was in "*pratique*."

We arrived with our carts of luggage in front of a long range of storehouses, having doors communicating with a street on one side, and with the water steps on the other.

A guard on the outside gave notice, before he opened the street-door, that the opposite or water-door might be shut first, in order to prevent a current of air. On inquiring, I found this precaution was to prevent the least particle of *cotton wool*, a *feather*, *small bit of thread*, *paper*, or *twine*, from blowing from the quarantine to the *pratique* side of the house. I found that the immense storehouse had a line drawn on the floor in the centre, with a double set of officers and workmen, one set "*in contumacia*" on the port side, the other in "*pratique*."

The first thing we saw was the captain of our steamer receiving certain stores from our side of the house, and arranging the money matters in the following manner. He threw the money into a vessel containing vinegar; then an officer emptied the vessel on the floor at our side of the line,

and the receiver of the cash then gathered it up and departed. But, before the street-door was allowed to be reopened, a shout was made to shut the opposite door. This process was going on in various parts down the long line of demarcation. If any person should happen to tread on the quarantine side of the line, he puts himself immediately "*in contumacia*," and the poor infected wight is fined, and then marched off under escort to the Lazaretto, there to realize the force of the old apothegm,

"C'est le premier pas qui coute."

Vast piles of merchandise were accumulated on each side of this Styx, waiting to be ferried across by the regular Charons of these regions. Our luggage being transferred to the Tartarean side of the gulf, we were then embarked, and soon found ourselves at "that bourne from which no traveller returns" without passing through the purifying atmosphere of that *Purgatory* of the East, the much-dreaded *Lazaretto*.

I know you will think the preceding account of an Eastern Quarantine establishment entirely too prolix for your taste; but as I shall have so frequent occasion to speak of those plagues of travellers during the long time I shall be in these regions of their influence, you will excuse me if I have preferred now to initiate you into the subject, in order to save the trouble of dwelling on it when other more interesting matter may demand your attention.

It was a lovely afternoon when we embarked; but, as sunset approached, the northern horizon began to threaten, and by the time we got out of dock, a fresh breeze commenced, which afterward increased to a perfect gale. We at first were engaged in viewing the beautiful appearance of Odessa from the water, as we could not enjoy the scene before, no small pleasure-boat ever being allowed to ply about in the port or outer harbour, on account of the sanitory regulations. A heavy snowstorm soon drove me below.

Night set in, and the sea began to rise; we, however, kept as close under the lee of the land all night as was prudent. As the day dawned, the gale and snowstorm increased, and after passing the mouth of the Danube, where the north coast suddenly recedes and forms the Gulf of Varna, we took the full force of the gale, and found, to our cost, that this *Black Sea* was of a nature corresponding with its significant name; all the unfavourable accounts we had heard of its usual tempestuousness at this season were more than realized. As we had treated so lightly the warnings of our friends at Moscow and Odessa, we now wished ourselves out of the crazy boat, and back again among the snows of Russia, content to winter there or cross the Balkan, could we only be set on shore with our lives. There were no ports at hand, and to lay the vessel to would be attended with more danger than to send her before the wind, which had now increased to one of the wildest hurricanes I ever encountered. This sea differs from the ocean in the same way that all small seas do. The waves are not long and easy, but short and chopping, and *dangerous in the extreme*, particularly to a *steamer*. The vessel on board which we were had been a sloop-of-war, and was furnished with a weak engine, serving only for freighting down the heavy and bulky produce of Russia to Constantinople for a market. This being the last trip for the year, the boat was overloaded, and, in addition to merchandise, her decks were encumbered with immense boxes, weighing a ton each, containing military *materiel* from the Russian manufactories, going to the Turkish army. Our vessel laboured so much that we would have lightened her, by throwing overboard all this lumber, had we had the physical force on board to do it. The Russian *boors* who passed for sailors had given up long ago, and were not to be found, leaving only our active little captain and his engineer (both Englishmen), and one Maltese sailor, to do all the duty; the former at one time as-

sisting the engineer at his arduous task, and at another lending a hand to the sailor at the wheel. My husband, being an old sailor, rendered his aid, first to one and then the other, during the whole forty-eight hours of our suffering, without taking a single minute for sleep. Indeed, it was both his and the captain's opinion that the vessel could not survive from one hour to another, but that she would founder in the open sea. Thus I passed the most painful day of my life; but, during the intervals of my anxiety, I could not help now and then thinking that if the "*Argonauts*" of old had to encounter many such trying scenes upon the Black Sea as that which fell to *my* lot, they dearly won their "Golden Fleece." To this dreadful day a more awful night succeeded, and everything was given up in despair; the vessel's head being obliged to be kept towards our port, we were in imminent danger of having our flat and weak stern driven in by the force of the following sea, from which we were unable to escape with sufficient speed.

Another day equally tempestuous arose upon us, and with it now came, if it were possible, a more fearful anxiety. Our veteran navigator and skilful captain felt, and could not help manifesting how *deeply* he felt, our awful situation, with thick and snowy weather, a lee shore directly ahead, and in perfect ignorance how near it might be to us. The day wore away, and the gale increasing every moment, we expected it would be our last; for, if we should strike the reefs near the Turkish coast, not one soul could possibly escape.

Just about sunset a slight gleam of light appeared in the western horizon, and under the edge of the black cloud over us, most fortunately, we caught a glimpse of the breakers *close under our bow*, just in time to save us. The helm being shifted in an instant, we ran along the shore just outside the breakers. Our captain and his pilot, however, disagreed in opinion whether the land near us was the European or Asiatic coast of the Bosphorus, and in this dilemma we

continued our uncertain course, determining, if we did not discover the narrow mouth of the Bosphorus before dark, to look for a smooth place wherein to run the vessel on shore, in order to save our lives. Nothing but rocks and surf was under our lee, and, as night closed in again upon us, the wind, which had lulled a little about sunset, began again to roar with renewed fury. Our vessel strained and laboured so much that we thought she would start some of her planks. We had plenty of fuel left, and were just about calling into requisition the *forlorn hope*, by putting the vessel's head to the sea and wind, and endeavouring to keep off shore to obtain an offing for the night, when we saw a faint, glimmering light on shore. One said it was from a house, another from a vessel; but our quick-eyed and observing little Englishman said positively that it was one of the Turkish lighthouses. We immediately stood for it. Again we were in another dilemma, not knowing whether the light was on the *north* or *south* side of the entrance to the Bosphorus. In that complete state of uncertainty and desperation, we determined to stand close in for it, be it what it might, and trust to *steam* and good steerage to take either side when we got close to it.

On we went, booming over the waves, and, when close to the light, our captain recognised through the mist some peculiarity which determined his course, and *saved us* from certain death. In ten minutes more we were safely anchored in smooth water, in a small bay inside the Bosphorus, opposite to a village where the gay lights on shore and the music from two English and Russian frigates served to assure us of a perfect state of *safety*, which we could scarcely realize, so sudden had been the transition from a *momentarily expected death* to a state of perfect security and repose.

Thus, like old *Jason*, we escaped the jaws of the *Symplegades:* less fortunate, however, were those who followed us, for we have since learned that *four ships and brigs* which

left Odessa when we did were lost that night near the mouth of the Bosphorus, and of two that went on the reef, *every soul on board perished.*

If to those unfortunate adventurers the "*Black Sea*" has proved itself the "*Axenos*" of old, *our* sad experience can scarcely realize its more modern appellative of "*Euxenos.*"

We remained at anchor all night. Next morning we weighed anchor and proceeded down the strait of the Bosphorus. But I feel myself too much fatigued to enter upon the description of its beauties, which I will endeavour to do when I address you again.

After one of the most delightful feasts of magnificent scenery I ever partook of, old *Byzantium* of the Greeks, *Constantinople* of the Romans, *Stamboul* of the Osmanlies, the old palace of *Constantine*, the ruined house of the *Comneni*, and the mysterious seraglio of the *sultans*, all at once burst upon my sight; and while the confusion of ideas and tumultuous emotions of an over-excited imagination overcame me, our vessel rounded to in the Golden Horn, and dropped anchor under the guns of Seraglio Point. I am now called to supper, and, in case I should not return to you again before I sleep, I will bid you good-night.

LETTER II.

Sail down the Bosphorus.—Architectural Contrasts.—Memories of the Past.—The "Queen of the East."—Navy.

Constantinople, ——.

In my haste to arrive here and to assure you of my perfect safety, I could not dwell on our voyage down the Bosphorus, from where we came to anchor after escaping with our lives from the gale on the Black Sea. I will now re-

turn with you to that spot, and we will float along together down to Stamboul. In order to give us an opportunity to view the beautiful shore of the Bosphorus by daylight, our little captain anchored for the night.

After a refreshing sleep I arose, and got upon deck just as the sun was rising over the mountains on the Asiatic shore: a most glorious morning it was, and as glorious a scene now opened upon me. I had not seen anything like mountain scenery since I left Switzerland, seven or eight months ago (the rocky barriers between Norway and Sweden, at the point where we crossed, cannot deserve to be mentioned), and all since has been plain, plain, plain, and all Russia, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, is like the unbounded horizon of a great ocean. You can, therefore, readily conceive with what emotions of delight I first beheld the verdant mountains of Europe and Asia, raising their bold fronts as if in proud defiance of each other; the fine plantations and gardens climbing up their sides, and each shore one continuous line of fanciful Oriental buildings, close to the water's edge, with ever and anon a modern palace of the sultan, or castle of ancient times.

As our vessel shot out into the mid channel the scene varied; we could see out into the Euxine, now quite calm, and to the westward the view was bounded by distance and the turning of the channel a little below, where the sea-view becomes shut out. The Bosphorus here has much the appearance of a long lake, deeply imbedded among high hills, just as our Hudson is among the Highlands; but presents a totally different aspect in all its details. As our boat glided rapidly, assisted by the strong current, past both shores, I had not time to dwell on every detached object.

Those which first arrested my attention, from their standing out in bold relief, were several ancient and venerable stone castles, which carried me back from the present quiet scene around me to that age when the crescent and the

cross waved on each opposite battlement, and the proud display of Greek and Turkish warfare lined either shore. At that point where hostile Asia approaches nearest to Europe, two more castles mark the spot, where, when the Christian forces were worn out by constant watching, and weakened by dissensions, the proud Osmanlies descended like a torrent upon Christian Europe, never to be driven back until their empire of rapine shall have consumed itself, and its weak residuum be trampled under foot by indignant Christendom.

The numerous chateaux, villas, towns, and villages, with the countless domes and minarets of the mosques, and the hundreds of caiques which glided past us, filled with turbaned Turks and veiled women, queer Armenians, and chattering Greeks, were all to me so novel and unique that I could scarcely believe it to be reality; and I confess I could only think of scenes of the Arabian Nights, or fancy myself dreaming over a page of Hadji Baba.

In travelling over the different countries of Europe, the costumes and architecture of each nation so insensibly mingle with those of its neighbours in style and appearance, that one is not suddenly awakened by any great dissimilarity. One gradually descends from the elevated Gallic hotel, through the less ambitious structures of the Flemings, and in three days is seated in the snug two-story brick house of the quiet Dutchman, with its neat little parlour even with the street, and the white sanded "stoop," with its bench on each side; its half-door open, as if to invite to the homely hospitality within.

Strolling onward we rise again, by imperceptible degrees, through the quaint old dwellings of the northern Germans, gradually losing sight of painted bricks and high-pointed gables, until we reach the more ambitious architecture of the once proud Saxon; and thence, passing by the mongrel edifices of Austria, we reach the proud palace-cities of Italy.

The gradations of costume are quite as imperceptible. All is effected without calling forth a single remark or exciting the slightest feeling of surprise.

Coming now, as I did, from a modern European city (Odessa), but recently built, and peopled by persons a majority of whom are from western Europe—stepping, as it were, from the streets of Paris or Marseilles, and their gay saloons —in two days I found myself in Turkey, with everything differing so materially from what I had ever before seen. The turban in lieu of the hat, flowing robes and wide trousers in place of short coats and pantaloons, red and yellow slippers instead of boots, long beards and curled mustaches instead of shorn faces, and veiled heads in lieu of the female face divine. The stately sycamore after the stunted birch, the dense cypress forests after naked "steppes;" minarets in the place of towers and steeples, and the cry of the Muezzim instead of bells; Saracenic verandahs, latticed windows, and low fancy-painted wooden structures of Asiatic origin, instead of the straight lines of the severer Grecian architecture which prevails in Russia.

These and a hundred minor opposites, and the sudden transition from scenes familiar with earliest observation to those hitherto existing only in the fancy, and recollections of poetry and romance, reminiscences of Moore, Byron, and Scott, cause the contrast to take one by surprise, and work one up into a state of excitement too much allied to exaggeration to admit of calm investigation and impartial judgment. Yet to such feelings, so new, so agreeable, so undefinable, I delight at times to give way; and I have never before found myself under circumstances where romance seemed so nearly akin to reality, or imagination to matter of fact, as when sailing down the Bosphorus, and feeling myself surrounded by everything Oriental and Asiatic. I can thus account for the very many extravagant eulogiums we often read in the accounts of many travellers, suddenly arriving

from western countries, and sailing up the Bosphorus for the first time. These feelings being, "like angels' visits, few and far between," it seems a pity to shut one's heart against the sweet intrusion, but rather to court the ecstatic pleasure they induce, and by gentle embraces endeavour to arrest their fleeting course. The sad and sober realities of life are but too apt to claim dominion over us, and chase away those bright and pleasant dreams. Not caring to divest myself of the delightful emotions I experienced, I floated down the Bosphorus with Europe and Asia on either hand, having fresh in my mind the reminiscences of Greek and Persian struggles which these shores once beheld, of crusading armies with pike and pennon, lance and oriflamme, "in all the pride and panoply of war," careering on in thousands, with victory in their van, and returning across this strait in wretched decimals, rallying under the walls of the treacherous Greek, and craving protection and food from that emperor who had betrayed them among the defiles of the Taurus into the hands of their barbarous foe, whence few ever reached their own firesides or the halls of their ancestors. Now and then a holy palmer returned to tell the tale of their sad defeat, or the "gallant troubadour" chanted in ladye's chamber or at the festive board the wonders of the East and the exploits of the departed great.

Long after the flood of Deucalion burst these mountain barriers, and the furious Euxine spread desolation along the shores of Greece, causing the plains of Muscovie to rise from beneath the waters, and the Caspian to recede into its retired basin, refusing communication with the briny sea; long after these events the adventurous Argive drove his bright prow against this rapid current, and felt his way around the Euxine in search of the golden fleece.

Xenophon, with his ten thousand veterans, here consummated his famous retreat from Asia. First the Greek, and

then the warlike Roman claimed dominion over these waters and these hills.

In later times the merchant of Venice and his rival of Genoa strove for the ascendency; the latter fixed himself firmly upon the mountain top, where his eagle nests remain almost intact to this day. At last the turbaned Turk, debouching from the "Caspian Gates," came thundering down the plains of Asia Minor, and seated himself upon the throne of the last Cæsar.

While dwelling upon these and similar reminiscences, and indulging in reflections incident to them, we were hurried along by steam and current until, on turning an angle in the strait, the "Queen of the East" greeted my enraptured sight. While the gentlemen were on shore in quest of lodgings, I had an opportunity of observing at my leisure the scene around me, and a friend who came on board had the politeness to explain to me the details of this unique picture. From no one point can this wonderful panorama be viewed with so much satisfaction as from the one at which we were anchored, a little to the east of Seraglio Point.

I am told that there are several points of view from the tops of the surrounding hills, where the prospect is far more grand, but the singular details which go to fill up the great outline are there lost in the distance.

From our position I first faced the south, and had the shore of Asia directly before me, with the great suburb of *Scutary* extending a long distance to the east and west, and far inland, with its immense forests of cypress covering the rear. A little to the right of it is the site of ancient Chalcedon. On either hand I had the Bosphorus for miles to the eastward, and the sea of Marmora, with its numerous islands, as far as the eye could reach to the westward.

Turning round and facing the north, the whole city of Stamboul rose in front of me, from the water's edge to the top of the hills around; and the Golden Horn, filled with

thousands of all sorts of curious craft, from a light four-oared caique to the proud four-decker of 150 guns.

After gazing with wonder and mute astonishment on this immense and truly extraordinary amphitheatre, the imagination, by a very slight though perfectly natural effort at amplification, could continue the illusion and convert the whole scene into a vast "Coliseum," with its arena overflowed with water, and the moving objects on its surface acting out to the life scenes of a splendid *naumachia*, worthy of the greatest Cæsar that ever catered for the insatiate desires of a Roman world. The first object of importance near to me is Seraglio Point, which always attracts the stranger's earliest attention; but I must acknowledge that, however great my impatience had been to see this celebrated spot, my disappointment exceeded it. Instead of the stately palaces and Oriental grandeur which most travellers describe as belonging to this renowned residence of so many sultans, I saw only a mass of irregular buildings, thrown together without any architectural rule, and in defiance of all good taste, be that taste Eastern or Western. The only redeeming quality it has is that the barbarism of its exterior *ensemble* is in perfect keeping with the bloody and ferocious scenes which have been so often enacted within. The style of architecture is neither Grecian, Egyptian, Moresque, nor Gothic; and in grandeur it falls far short of the ancient seat of the Czars of Russia, the Kremlin of Moscow. Its interior I may describe to you hereafter. A very interesting association is attached to this spot: on the extremity of this cape was situated the ancient city of Byzantium, showing the tact of its founders in the selection of a site. There is a historical anecdote which says that when the founders of Byzantium were about to "locate" their city, they of course consulted the oracle. The reply, as usual, was obscure, though full of meaning when rightly applied. "*Let it be over against the country of the blind men.*" Now where was

to be found a country of "blind men?" Another largesse to the priests, and another rich offering to the shrine of the popular oracle, brought this solution to the enigma: That the men of Chalcedon were blind, inasmuch as they had overlooked this unrivalled site for a city when they were founding their own. All eyes being now open to the advantages of this promontory, the beautiful and sheltered harbour of the Golden Horn, and its sweet water river—the former for defence, and the latter for its navies and commerce—the city of Byzantium soon rose into magnificence, power, and grandeur unequalled in those days; so that when the Western capital of the Cæsars became too insecure for them, they, as you very well know, adopted this as the capital of the Roman empire.

The cape, bounded by the Golden Horn on one side and the Sea of Marmora on the other, is in form very like the lower half of Manhattan Island, and the site of Byzantium like the site of New Amsterdam, at the extreme point.

The ground is quite undulating, and in several places rises into hills, which are now each adorned by a separate mosque. Would that the level and chain of our engineers, and the spade and scraper of the labourer, had not done their murderous work upon the green mounts of Manhattoes, else we might now have seen another seven-hilled city in the West. There is nothing left of Byzantium save its history. But the city of Constantine has bequeathed to us a few legacies, whereby to keep us in mind of its former power and splendour. The first great dome seen on my left is the mosque of St. Sophia, once the magnificent temple of Constantine, and dedicated to the worship of the religion of Christ. The tall column rearing its head just beyond is another relic of the early times, and near it are the ruins of the palace of Constantine.

Those immense arches striding from hill to hill, and embracing the valley between, form the aqueduct of Justinian,

and are, no doubt, built on the site of a much earlier structure; for not even young Byzantium could have existed without bringing the sweet waters in this manner to its gates. One or two ruined baths, in addition to the above, are all that is visible of the Roman city from this point. Those splendid structures, many of them, were Christian temples, which the religion of Mohammed has now converted into mosques. Every hill is covered with them, and the tortuous sky-line of this beautiful panorama is everywhere broken by their swelling domes and lofty minarets.

At the farther end of the Golden Horn begin the ancient walls of Constantinople, which run across the cape to the Sea of Marmora, and the city of Stamboul is entirely confined within them.

Opposite these is Pera, the residence of all the Franks, and the seat of the foreign diplomacy.

A wall with towers of the middle ages is seen beginning at the water's edge, and running up the hill a considerable distance, and then, returning again to the water, it encloses a space large enough for a considerable town, which is now called Galata.

These gray old walls, their ditches, gates, and towers, tell of the power and wealth and greatness of the merchant city of Genoa; for it was here that she entrenched herself in the midst of Islam, defending the bureaux and warehouses of her factors with her treasure and her chivalry. At these quays lay in quiet repose and certain security the rich "argosies" of her Dorias and Durazzi.

The towering structure on the hill-top behind was no doubt the "Fanale" that greeted her benighted mariners, when in the wild sirocco their heavy laden "caravels" came booming over the Marmora. From hence also were fitted out those semi-commercial and warlike expeditions, which ploughed the Euxine to its utmost bounds, there exchanging with the distant caravan the merchandise of the

western world for the rich produce of "*Serica*," and the gems and odours of "*Cathay*."

Galata, like her widowed mother "Genova la superba," retains a portion of her ancient commercial enterprise; and it is at her docks that lies all the commerce of Stamboul, and on her quays are still heaped the manufactures of the West and the treasures of the East.

Beyond Galata, on the Bosphorus, is seen the Arsenal, and next to it the winter palace of Mahmoud. That palace was built there in order to avoid the dangerous residence of the old seraglio, wherein scarcely ever sultan died a natural death.

Stretching away as far as the eye can reach are villas side by side, until they are lost in the perspective. In front of the sultan's palace is anchored a great part of his splendid navy, three and four deckers, with their bright brass guns "in battery" grinning from every port; frigates, sloops, and brigantines, tenders, launches, gigs, and caiques. But the proudest of them all is a trim-built, tall-rigged Yankee frigate, the most business-looking craft among them. She rides here a proud monument of the skill of our lamented fellow-citizen, Henry Eckford.

The whole area of these waters is filled with vessels of every nation and of every possible shape, from the ancient form of building of those who, in scripture times, went "down to the sea in ships," to the splendid merchantman of modern days.

In every possible direction are to be seen clipper-boats of curious shapes; and, filled with various fancy costumes, feluccas and xebecs, with lofty lateen sails swelling in the breeze, careering and curveting around us, contributed to fill up the measure of this fairy scene.

On the moment of our landing there was one of the greatest cannonadings I ever heard in my life. All the vessels of war in the harbour poured out their thunders

from hundreds of brazen mouths, and some of such enormous size that they seemed to shake the very waters under us. It was some fête day; and the sultan, going to mosque, was being saluted, as is the custom here.

At the quay I found that there were oilcloth cloaks provided for us, in order to prevent contact with any person who might possibly communicate the plague to us.

We had to scramble up the steep hill through Galata to Pera, where our hotel is situated. That, and the excitement and fatigue of this most eventful day of my life, have so exhausted my mental faculties and prostrated my physical strength, that I am sure no other excuse need be given you for the many exceptions you will have reason to take with this present tedious letter.

Once more, good-night.

LETTER III.

Stamboul.—The Caique.—An Oriental Landscape.—The Land of the East.—Seraglio Point.

Constantinople, ——.

You doubtless expect me now to enter into much detail respecting the interior of Stamboul; but I am sorry to say that I fear your anticipations on that point will meet with some disappointment, for it would ill become me to pretend to give you even a faint idea of things which in themselves are to me so new and as yet unstudied; besides, it would be altogether superfluous to waste your valuable time in repeating over, in my hurried and discursive manner, that which you can at any moment find so much better done by abler pens than mine. Would you not consider as unworthy of acceptance any gleanings which I might gather from

a field so lately and so faithfully harvested by such a master-hand as that of our present worthy and able minister at the Sublime Porte, Commodore Porter? The commodore has just presented us with a copy of his valuable and interesting work on Constantinople; and, besides the thanks we owe him for his politeness, I feel doubly indebted to him for having thus put me in possession of a mass of information which I might have sought for elsewhere in vain. In addition to which, also, this agreeable book, of which, until this day, I had no knowledge (it having been published since I left home), will spare me the necessity of going into many details with which I had proposed to myself to furnish you.

However, as no two persons ever take exactly the same view of that which comes under their observation, I will record some of my impressions, merely for your own private gratification, referring you for details to the commodore's book, which I am sure will suit your taste better than all the dry volumes that have appeared on this interesting subject since that now obsolete work of Lady Mary Wortley Montague.

Since my last we have made our first journey and voyage of discovery in this amphibious world of Stamboul. No excursion can be made without two or three, or more, trips across the water, and that in those little eggshell *caiques*, which seem every moment as though they would topple over. Apropos of a "*caique*:" as I shall frequently have to mention it, better now that I should try to describe one to you. They are of various sizes, with one to four pairs of oars, and sometimes more. All over three pairs of oars are reserved especially for persons of some importance in the state and diplomatists; no plebeians like ourselves may pretend to encroach upon the dignity of those grandees, by assuming the privileged number of oars, under penalty of some punishment: just as the custom prevails in Russia, that none save the family of the Czars are permitted to wear

the imperial ermine, or in Tuscany, as I am told, to drive more than four in hand. The caiques are all, large and small, built upon the same model, extremely light and long, with a round bottom and no keel. They are quite as light and tottering as our Indian bark canoes, and extremely dangerous to those unaccustomed to their management. They are generally handsomely carved within, and kept extremely neat and clean. There is but one elevated seat for passengers, and that is for one person only; it is in the extreme stern. The other part of the company must be seated "*à la Turque*," on a carpet in the *bottom* of the boat, in order to keep the greatest weight below the centre of gravity. The least unskilfulness in the manner of sitting alters so much the trim of the boat, that the surly boatmen will not dip an oar until we "Giaours" place ourselves just as they direct; and we, of course, must needs submit to the dictation of these dingy Charons, or we should have to wait until Doomsday to be ferried over.

I felt the full force of the old saw that says, when in Turkey one must do as Turks do, and I am now beginning to lose my national importance and impatience, and am becoming as resigned and apathetic in matters of discomfort and inconvenience as the most devoted follower of the Prophet. Before we ventured to dive into the dark and mysterious labyrinths of Stamboul, we thought it best to take our usual precaution, that of ascending some tower to observe well how the land lies, and to take a fair departure. We have always found, by so doing when we first enter any foreign city and when we are about to leave it, that we obtain an indelible impression of its general location, form, and extent, the proportionate size and peculiar appearance of its principal monuments and other prominent features. I would recommend all young and persevering travellers to adopt this practice, although too fatiguing a one, perhaps, for the listless tourist, who, like his portmanteau, is carried

along by the current from place to place, indifferent to anything which is certain to require personal exertion, or induce the least mental or bodily fatigue, satisfied if he can but return home and say "Veni, vidi," "Vincit" belonging not to the same category of his associations.

The tower of the Genoese being very near our hotel, just below the summit of the hill of *Pera*, we hastened to ascend its giddy height. And oh! such a *glorious* sight as here burst upon my view what pen can describe! At this moment my fingers refuse to do their office, and my trembling pencil does not aspire even to trace the outline of this wonderful and gorgeous picture. My impressions and opinions, however, belong to myself. The former you desire always to participate in; and as you are ever generous enough to respect the latter, however erroneous they may be at times, I shall suppress my timidity, and give you an unreserved expression of both whenever I think they will in the least contribute to your amusement and satisfaction. I now say, without fear of contradiction, that the view from *this* point of Stamboul is far more magnificent than any other view that Europe can present. I am informed by persons here, who have travelled the wide world over, that they never have seen anything to compare with this view of the Queen of the East, as she is seated in Oriental majesty upon her seven-hilled throne. Her back towards Europe, her fixed regard on Asia, her either arm reaching from the Euxine to the Marmora, and, surpassing *Canute*, presents her either foot to *two seas at once*, saying, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther." And to all the nations that may venture in peace upon her glorious waters, she says, Bow thy head, pay tribute, and pass on! Should an enemy have the foolhardy temerity to attempt a passage of her threshold, she would laugh in derision at his puny efforts and bid defiance to the navies of the world. It was a glorious morning when I looked out for the first time in my life upon this

rich and extended Oriental landscape, in the midst of which is enshrined the mightiest city of the East. Every feature marks it as a truly *Oriental* scene. The domes and minarets of the mosques, the star and crescent waving over the ships, the cypress forests, the vine-clad hills, all betokened this the land of the *East*, the very personification of poetry, even brighter and more enchanting than those beautiful lines of Byron, wherein he asks,

"Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime?
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine,
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppress'd with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul in her bloom;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute;
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?
'Tis the clime of the East, 'tis the land of the Sun."

Who is there that, looking down upon this peculiar scene, can feel other than a tumult of contending emotions, powerful as they are opposite, and intensely interesting from the high excitement which they produce and the glow of satisfaction which they inspire, arising from this rare privilege of visiting a spot fraught with so many, so great, and such extraordinary associations. Has not the poet just said,

"Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine?"

Yet is not this also the land of *pestilence* and plague?

"Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,"

and yet is it not also the land where "man is a despot and woman a *slave*," and sold as cattle in the market-place?

Is not this the land by Nature blessed beyond her pale, and where "all save the spirit of man is divine?" and yet is it not here that those blessings are least appreciated, and left to run fallow through the sheer neglect and inanity of the lazy and stupid possessors of the soil? Is not this once splendid capital of a Roman empire now the mere rendezvous of a horde of beastly Tartars?

The palace of a Constantine and the stately temples of a Theodosius, are they not levelled with the dust; and from their discordant materials have not sprung the Vandalian structures of a barbarous race of Turcomans? The Christian temple, once dedicated to the service of the God of peace, has it not been sacked, and its priests passed over with the bloody cimeter, and its sacred altar profaned by the worship of the murderous Moslem?

Does not the *crescent* now wave where first in all the East the *cross* was raised as a nation's standard?

Are not the intrigues of a polluted hareem now directed by a sultan mother, on the very spot where an Empress Helena once moved the splendid court of her all-powerful son in favour of the gospel of Christ, and the pure religion which it inculcates? In short, this capital, intended by Nature to be the key of the East, and the seat of empire and of power, has it not now become a proverb among the nations for its weakness and imbecility?

From the halls of that palace, whose ruined walls lie scattered around, went forth the mandates which called into existence those stately structures whose domes and arches now serve to mark those sacred spots in Palestine, rendered "Holy Land" by the birth, the life, the death and resurrection of our Christ, and the acts and martyrdom of his apostles. Shade of Helena! couldst thou but rise and see thy loved Sophia's shrine, desecrated by the infidel, her altars polluted by the hands of a guilty and benighted priesthood, her sacred cross displaced by Islam's crescent, and the

bloody banner waving over God's holy fane, in despair wouldst thou return to thy resting-place, to await that judgment-day when a just retribution may be expected upon those who now trample under foot the sacred emblem of our holy religion. But, before that day arrives, we are promised a millennium of peace, when all men shall be of one religion. God's peculiar people will again be gathered into one fold. The Turk and all the Moslem race will ere then have disappeared; the days of the evil to come will have passed away; and the seven golden candlesticks be once more replaced, and lighted in the midst of Asia.

At that perhaps not distant epoch the crescent will fall from each proud minaret, and the emblem of the Christian faith resume its former place, and these swelling domes shall again resound with loud *Hosannas to the Lord of Hosts.*

When I took you to the tower of Galata to overlook the city of Stamboul and its dependences, nothing could have been farther from my thoughts than being surprised into this long digression.

Suffice it now to say, that having taken a satisfactory observation of different important localities, we descended and walked to the foot of the hill, where we embarked, and were soon put across the Golden Horn to Seraglio Point, the first object of all travellers in this region of romance and song. Here, according to the itinerary of Constantinople in the book of the minister, we commenced our work of lionizing in regular order, determined not to leave unnoticed one ancient stone that might have been fashioned after the order of a Constantine, a Theodosius, or even a Justinian, and to ransack old Stamboul until we saw all she now possesses of the city of Constantine or of the older Byzantium. You will perceive by his book that the minister has divided the Eastern capital into seven sections, corresponding with as many hills, and to each one he calls the attention of the industrious traveller for at least one day.

I shall not trouble you with a detailed account of each day's progress through the mazes of old Stamboul's crooked lanes, but at the end of my sevenfold task I shall return to you and notice only the more prominent objects which may attract my notice.

As our time here will necessarily be short, on account of other arrangements and the lateness of the season, we shall call here again on our return from the East, and, perhaps, at a different season of the year, when we can better enjoy the delights of the beautiful environs than this winter weather will now permit.

When the minister's week shall have been faithfully employed, I will return to you again: until then,

Adieu.

LETTER IV.

A Snow-storm.—Turkish Picnics.—The Golden Horn.—The Sultan's Palace.—The Missionaries.—A Turkish Banker.—A Turkish Breakfast.—A Banker's Troubles.—The Art of rising.—Travellers' Perplexities.

Constantinople, ——.

We are now completely *snowed* under; the snow is still descending, and the wild wind roaring about our ears calls to mind the steppes of Russia and the storms we there experienced. I thought that when once under the lee of the mighty *Balkan* I should neither see nor hear of winter. This is very unusual weather for this country, as you may well suppose when I inform you that there are *no fireplaces* in the houses. I am now seated at one of those warming machines called a "*tandour*;" it is a table about four feet square, lined underneath with tin, and on the floor is a brass vessel called a "*mangal*," filled with coals; an ornamental cover is laid over the table, reaching down to the floor;

several persons sit around, and, lifting the cloth upon their laps, put their feet under the table, thus keeping the nether man in a tolerably comfortable state, while the back and shoulders are left to take care of themselves.

The houses here, being built for summer, are all windows, and those not well fitted, so that there is no such thing as warming the rooms with this temporary fire apparatus.

By means of hanging up shawls to some half dozen of the surplus shutterless windows, and placing several supernumerary "mangals" between me and the wall, I feel as if I am tolerably secure for the evening.

We are now very cosily sitting around our table, reading, writing, and consoling each other under our present affliction. The only one who does not seem to heed this Lapland weather is my brave little Muscovite *Nic;* he frisks about the courtyard in the snow, barking at and biting all the shaggy Turkish curs that venture to trespass on the premises.

Yesterday we made an excursion, by which we circumnavigated the whole of Stamboul. We took a boat at Galata, rowed first to the navy-yard, where we saw the fine frigate which Mr. Rhodes, successor to the late Mr. Eckford, the American naval architect, is now building for the sultan. They who seem to be judges of such kind of work pronounce this vessel to be a perfect specimen of the art. From thence we sailed to the valley of the "*sweet waters*," where there is a small fresh-water river falling into the upper end of the Golden Horn, on the banks of which there is, pleasantly situated, a handsome villa belonging to the sultan.

This is one of the places where, in summer, the Turkish families go to make "*keff*," which in our Western idiom might be rendered *jollification*, or, more classically speaking, a *saturnalia;* but in reality is a sort of uproarious picnic party; a kind of safety-valve by which they let off all their surplus gayety, in order the better to sustain their usual gravity at home.

We next rowed to the spot where the great wall commences at the shore of the Golden Horn, where we had sent horses on to meet us; we thence rode over the cape to the Marmora, about six miles, with the triple wall on our left, and one interminable graveyard on our right, and not a single house of any kind to be seen. These immense walls and towers were erected by several of the Greek emperors (*Roman* emperors I call them), and we saw the spot where Mohammed the Second made the fatal breach with the newly-invented engine of war, the thundering cannon and its murderous projectiles.

In that breach perished the last of the emperors, bravely defending the remnant of this once great empire. Through that breach first poured into the beautiful city those Tartar hordes, who, thirsting for the blood of Christians, bade the cimeter do its worst, and over the bodies of the prostrate Greeks was raised the standard of Islam.

By the imperfect and hurried manner of repairing this breach, and the perfect state of every other part of the wall, the spot may easily be recognised.

Near the Marmora are the famous seven towers, where such foreign ambassadors as incurred the displeasure of the "Porte" were formerly confined. It is a sort of citadel, of no great strength against artillery. From thence we again took to the water, and rowed along the sea wall for five miles to Seraglio Point. The sea wall appears to have been built and rebuilt very often, and of all sorts of materials, from the meanest stone to be found on any shore, to the splendid marble of Paros and the beautiful granites of Egypt.

Columns and capitals, cornices and friezes, are all mingled with viler materials in one heterogeneous mass. It grieved me to see *thousands* of splendid marble and granite antique columns used for the under-water foundations of

these walls, laid in cross-piles like stacks of wood, as common and in as great profusion as our ordinary dock-logs, the surges of the sea tearing them to atoms one by one, until the superincumbent mass topples over, to be again rebuilt in the same rude manner. The only departure that I saw from complete Vandalism was the front of a beautiful Grecian temple, so placed in the wall as to preserve its original form; it must have been the taste of some poor Grecian architect slave pressed into the service of these barbarians.

We rowed to "Tophana," or the cannon foundry of the sultan, where he casts and prepares the brass guns for his fleet. Near this spot is a beautiful fountain, built after a perfect Persian model, of white marble. It is indeed a beautiful object, but situated in as vile a spot as you can possibly imagine. This, however, is Turkish taste. We next rowed past the present palace of the sultan; it is a rather mean affair for the great emperor of all the Turks; but a little beyond it is being erected a new palace, standing on columns of white marble from the island of Marmora; the upper part is of wood. It is altogether in the European style, and will be a pretty place, but not at all imposing. Beside it is a smaller palace for the hareem. We left our boat at this point, and again taking horses, rode over the hill to the back of Pera, where is one of the great "*Casernes*," or military barracks, with a parade-ground. It is there that the sultan has a strong detachment of his new troops, now being taught European tactics.

This military post, and one other much larger some distance beyond, filled with soldiers, well paid, clothed, and fed, serve as a strong defence against any irregular revolutionary army that might issue forth from the populous city, and attempt to get round by the head of the inner harbour to attack the sultan in his present safe retreat.

Returning home through the main street of Pera, we had

a good opportunity of seeing the effects of the late immense conflagration, which swept off almost every house in this very extensive suburb, all of which (though said to be many thousands) were replaced in the course of a very few months. The whole of them are of wood, and more slightly built than any houses I have ever seen in any country. I am almost afraid to walk past some of them. Our home is with a Greek family, who add to their small income by entertaining such foreign European travellers as find their way to their house. Signora *Josephina's* boarding-house is decidedly the best place of the kind in Pera; her brothers are excellent "*cicerones*," and one of them has always accompanied us in our out-goings and in-comings.

Our very worthy minister, Commodore Porter, not enjoying good health, seldom comes to town. We have made several appointments to go to St. Stephano, a village on the Marmora, where he now resides, but have invariably been disappointed. We had set apart this day to visit him by particular invitation, but the violence of the sea would not permit any boat to live on the Marmora, and the snow has so choked up the roads as to preclude the possibility of going on horseback. I fear we shall not have the pleasure of seeing him until we return.

We have had frequent intercourse with our excellent missionary families stationed here. That veteran labourer in the good cause, the Rev. Mr. Goodell, and his coadjutor, the Rev. Mr. Dwight, have been very attentive to us, and their kindness has been of considerable service. We have visited their admirable school establishment, and are fully persuaded of its immense utility, and firmly convinced that they have adopted the right and only course to penetrate the darkness that overshadows this heathen land.

It is by *educating the youth*, and, with the rudiments of useful knowledge, inculcating the first principles of virtue; then, in the soil thus prepared, to plant the seeds of a true

religion, and afterward, with the heavenly dews of Christian example, and the benign showers of timely and well-directed counsel, aided by the blessings of Providence, much good fruit may be expected from this present barren and stony field. The oldfashioned method of an *indiscriminate proselytism* is found not to answer.

In their labours among the Turks they have not forgotten that their brethren, the *Armenian Christians*, have strayed far, very far, away from the straight road, and their exertions to bring the lambs of that flock into the true fold of Christ are worthy of all praise; they deserve the blessings of mankind while here on earth, and there is promised them in heaven "*an exceeding great reward.*" A few days since they accompanied us on a visit to one of the first Armenian families of this country. The head of the family is the wealthy *seraff* or banker to the grand vizier, and resides some distance up the Bosphorus. We took boats at Tophana, and, after rowing several miles, landed at an obscure village. In a few minutes we found ourselves opposite an old, black, dingy-looking house, and I was surprised on being told that this was the residence of the great seraff of the grand vizier. Being aware, however, that one must not, in these countries, judge from outward appearances, I expected to find something within more in accordance with the wealth and high station of the individual whom we were about to visit. Nor was I disappointed; for, on entering, I found a great deal of comfort and some display of wealth. After passing several anterooms in the basement, we were shown up stairs into the great saloon, where we were all invited to take seats on the divan; immediately pipes were introduced, and, as soon as the long "*chiboucks*" were at work, we were enveloped in a cloud of dense smoke; nor was I permitted to decline assisting at this ceremony of hospitality, but found the amber mouthpiece at my lips oftener and longer than I had supposed I could have borne it.

The ease with which the cool smoke follows the breath through these long cherry sticks, five or six feet in length, is indescribable, and the taste of the smoke is far from being disagreeable, even to such a tyro as myself in the art of whiffing. Coffee being introduced, its strength and fragrance added a new zest to the vapours of the narcotic weed, and I soon found myself puffing away in happy unison with quiet and contented friends around me, all seated "*à la Turc*" on the long divans.

The ladies and children of the family were now introduced, not veiled as is the custom of the Turkish women before men, but with smiling faces, greeting us with much grace and affability.

We were then conducted through the house, and found it replete with conveniences and comforts. The principal furniture, however, consisted of divans. The lady of the house showed me her rich wardrobe and jewels.

Breakfast being announced, we were ushered into a large room, where was a long table covered with all the dainties of the Grecian, Armenian, and Turkish "*cuisines.*" I never in my life saw such a variety of singular dishes on a table at one time; and when I learned that each guest was expected to partake of each individual dish, I became alarmed lest I should commit some great breach of etiquette in refusing some very repulsive-looking mixtures, or come out of the ordeal with a surfeit and indigestion. However, by keeping up a running fire of conversation with the ladies (through our missionary interpreter), I managed to smuggle away many untouched messes under cover of the smoke. There were, however, some delightful dishes, particularly at the dessert.

In compliment to us, and in order to conform to our Frank customs in one very essential particular, the table was of the usual height with us, so as to admit of *chairs* being used, instead of taking the meal sitting *à la Turc*, on a low divan,

with a small low bench before every three or four persons, as is generally the custom here.

During the conversation, one of the gentlemen remarked to the seraff that he must enjoy life exceedingly, having so fine a family and so delightful a house, with such a pleasant prospect from its windows across the Bosphorus.

Besides being possessed of so much wealth as was imputed to him, he had it in his power to procure all the comforts and luxuries of every clime. I was particularly struck with the substance and manner of his reply. He shrugged his shoulders, and shook his head with a very significant, painful sort of smile; then, passing the edge of his hand across his throat, rolled his eyes upward towards the ceiling, gave a deep sigh, and said it would all be very well if not so *uncertain*. Every moment of his existence hung by a thread so small as to be almost imperceptible. I afterward learned that in case his patron, the grand vizier, should be caught in any mal-practices, or *peculation in office*, he would either be banished or strangled, in which case his *banker* would suffer death, and his wealth confiscation.

You no doubt may suppose, as I did, that when once a banker had made an independence by his connexion with an officer of government, he would be contented to break off the dangerous alliance and retire in peace; but where did you ever find that when great gains were flowing in upon an individual, the result of bold speculation, hazardous gambling, or daring adventure, he had sufficient self-control to break off at the right moment? It is not until the turn of the tide produces a sudden and sad reverse that his eyes are open to his folly. The connexion between a Turkish grandee and his banker is of so singular and curious a nature, that I will endeavour to explain it, even at the risk of the subject proving not as interesting to you as it now is to me.

Every Turk holding any office or appointment under gov-

ernment is obliged to have an Armenian of known wealth as *security* for the faithful performance of his trust, and, in order to render the Armenian secure, he is appointed *banker and supervisor* over all the property, money affairs, and transactions of the officer, and nothing can be done by the Turk without his leave and concurrence. The banker is bound for all his contracts with government and with individuals; being supposed, in the eye of the law, to be privy to all the mal-practices of the principal. It is a singular custom, that no Turk in office is permitted to be his own banker, nor can his honour or probity be allowed as security towards government. One Turk is not, in such cases, considered good security for another Turk.

Formerly the Jews, a high-minded and honourable, but unfortunate race, when they first came from Spain, were the *seraffs* of Turkish grandees; but they, after a time, becoming degenerated and abusing the trust, it was taken from them, and transferred to the stupid, plodding, but industrious and wealthy Armenian Christians. The Greeks have never had the confidence of the Mussulmans in money matters. This singular alliance between Mohammedan and Christian, in matters of interest, is only equalled by the extraordinary manner in which many times it is brought about in individual cases. A Turk, holding a responsible office in some of the provinces, being in the habit of embezzling a portion of the revenues, or in the practice of other equally culpable conduct, some aspirant for the office seeks an opportunity, and soon obtains sufficient proofs of the same, with which he proceeds to the capital. Now, as no person can get access to the ear of "the government" without a golden key, the possessor of the secret evidence is obliged to seek one who can furnish this key; and there are always obscure though wealthy Armenians enough, who stand ready to furnish the *wherewith*, in proportion as the object is more or less important, and the evidence of guilt more or less

clear and positive. This union of *turban* and *calpack* is now brought to bear upon the right point; the proper wires are set in motion among the underlings about the court, and gradually, as interest is made and secured, a higher and a still higher ear is gained, until the sultan himself is made fully acquainted with the delinquency of his servant. Then vengeance is sure to fall on the guilty head of the offender; not that the delinquent is more guilty than every other servant of the Porte, but that he has had the misfortune to have it brought home to him.

A firman is fulminated against the offending party; a messenger is sent to bring his head, which the culprit unresistingly lays down, and with a perfect *sang froid* exclaims, "God is great!" Another wire is pulled in the proper place, and the informer is invested with the dignity of the fallen bey, and the meek silversmith of the bazar is transformed at once into the proud *seraff*. His first business now is to strive to obtain a reimbursement of his heavy advances, by driving the most advantageous bargains for his patron at court, in the way of monopolies and bounties on the one hand, and on the other by bribes in the right places to cover the official delinquencies of his master, in which he participates. His first object accomplished, he then enriches himself by preying on his employer and the government, cheating both at once in all his accounts. He soon finds himself a *millionnaire;* not daring, however, to enjoy his wealth openly, yet sufficiently incautious eventually to stumble headlong into the *bowstring*, his ill-gotten treasure reverting to the place whence it was first derived, the treasury of the sovereign. There are, however, some few honourable exceptions to this rule.

Leaving bankers and bowstrings, I will now relate to you a little incident which transpired at our late visit, and which, while it manifested the kind feelings of our host,

gave me the first opportunity I had met with of realizing the Oriental custom of making presents to visiters.

On going through one of the rooms, my husband admired a curious carpet which lay upon the floor. Our host, who had overheard his expressions of admiration, immediately insisted on our accepting it as a present, which, of course, we decidedly refused. He would listen to no refusal, saying that, as he had two of the same pattern, he could easily dispense with one, if we would honour him so much as to accept it. Opening a closet he produced a duplicate carpet, and sent it to our boat in spite of our protestations. We found no difficulty, however, in arranging a treaty with him, to accept some day or other a present from us in return. So we took our departure from his hospitable mansion, and, seated on his Turkey carpet, we were soon rowed back again to Tophana.

I am very fearful that you will find the reading of my late letters dull and heavy work, after the more light and playful effusions which I used to indite during leisure hours last winter in Paris for your amusement. The occupation of constant travelling induces in one such a *business habit*, such a straightforward march of thought and action, that embellishment of style and choice of words in conversation or in writing are as little heeded as those peculiar comforts and elegances which attend a more settled and permanent mode of life.

I have had much *roughing* work for some months past, and have still the same before me for a long time to come; you must not wonder, therefore, if my familiar communications to you have gradually lost their former feminine character, and finally put on the masculine garb of a traveller by profession, in place of the more graceful habit of a female tourist.

Another concomitant of this sort of travelling is, that one becomes *indifferent* to many of those lighter amusements

which attend an ordinary Italian or Rhineland excursion, where one has more time, inclination, and opportunity to cull the delicate flowers that line the wayside in those more cultivated and frequented regions of pleasure and recreation. Besides, by mixing so much with the world, and seeing such a diversity of countries and people, one's feelings become *blazé*, and one's susceptibilities lose that vivid freshness which, in early life or in our first communications with the great world, causes our hearts to leap with joy at every new pleasure and exciting object. Finally, one's taste becomes so fastidious, so *exigeant*, that one is no longer satisfied with mere *commonplaces*, either in men or things.

* * * * * *

The wintry blast which is now howling about our ears, and shaking our frail wooden tenement to its very foundations, calls vividly to my recollection our late perilous adventure among the angry billows of the Euxine; and the possibility that I shall be obliged to cross them again in a few days, causes a corresponding sad tone of feeling to pervade my mind to such a degree, that, were I to permit the outpouring of my spirit upon this paper, it would be less acceptable to you than the abrupt conclusion I shall now make.

It is not probable that I shall address you again from this place during the present visit. Where my next epistle will be dated I cannot now say, as there is some uncertainty about our future movements.

When at Odessa we heard rumours that the premature winter had so encumbered the defiles of Armenia with snow as to render them impassable. Our strong desire to penetrate to the *Great East* by way of Persia, induces us to cling to the hope that the next accounts from Trebisonde may be more favourable with respect to the road from thence to Teheran, at which point all difficulty as to weather or season vanishes.

In case the next advices from Armenia are not more

encouraging, we shall immediately proceed to Egypt, with the hope of arriving there in time for a steamer to Bombay.

One very annoying thing here is, that travellers can never get any information on which to rely respecting routes, conveyances, the health of the adjoining countries, or quarantines. It is all like groping in the dark. One must depend upon one's own resources, asking advice from none, nor heeding the timid cautions of any.

Go which way we may, one thing is certain, that another sea-voyage awaits me, and that, too, at a season of frequent and increasing storms and tempests. That I may pass through them in safety is now my fervent prayer to that overruling Providence into whose hands I commit my destiny.

With a heart oppressed with anxiety for the uncertain future, I once more bid you an affectionate Adieu.

LETTER V.

Departure from Constantinople.—Tokens of a Storm.—The Plain of Troy.—A narrow Escape.—"Old Ironsides."

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Smyrna, ——.

When that terrible "*coup d'hiver*" from the Urals of Siberia burst so unexpectedly upon us at Moscow, all our feelings became paralyzed, and our sympathies chilled into indifference for every object, save that of self-preservation and escape from the sphere of its influence.

The kind friends and delightful acquaintance which we had there formed were all for the moment forgotten, and all our energies were wrought up for one desperate effort to overcome the new and unforeseen difficulty.

Now, when the intense excitement and anxiety of that occasion have passed away, and I reflect calmly upon it, I know not which to admire most, the cool courage of those who determined upon our expedition across the snowy and frozen plains of Russia, or the skill which planned, sustained, and executed that hazardous enterprise. Thanks to the friends under whose protection I am, and by whose support and kind attentions I have been sustained through so many perils, than whom no travellers that I have ever seen evinced a greater degree of that "*savoir faire*" which enables one to foresee and provide against the inconveniences and privations consequent upon improvident and heedless, or parsimonious measures. The storms and snows pursued us from the Mosqua, through the Ukraine, and across the Black Sea, to the very gates of Stamboul. There, after enjoying several weeks of comparatively pleasant weather, we were induced to hope that the late premature cold would so far relax as to enable us to make our way through Armenia to Persia, and thus permit us to triumph over the interruption which threatened to thwart our plans.

But the gales that brought the late storms of hail and snow across the Euxine, brought likewise letters from Trebisonde, announcing a resumption of the rigours of winter in an unusual degree. Foiled at this point, the gentlemen determined (as I remarked to you in my last) upon immediately making the best of their way to Alexandria, there to endeavour to overtake the *Suez* steamer for Bombay. Consequently, the next day after my letter to you, they began and completed all their preparations for departure, so all I had to do was to gather up my traps and follow on. We sailed from Constantinople that same evening; and, if the storm-lashed surges of the Euxine brought such terrors with them as I have heretofore described to you, how much more painful must have been my feelings, when, in addition to a gale as heavy as the former, we had all that night the

severest snowstorm I ever saw, accompanied with tremendous *thunder and lightning:* a combination of terrors which, had I not seen it, I should never have believed could happen. The Marmora is too much land-locked to rise into waves as high as those of the Black Sea; but the greatest danger to be apprehended is that of running on some of its islands. We passed the Dardanelles the next morning, stopping to show the steamer's *pass* at the famous castle of Asia, near the spot where *Xerxes* made his bridge of boats to secure a safe retreat, over which he made so hasty and ignominious an escape from Greece, like Napoleon at Moscow and Egypt, abandoning his army to its fate.

Our steamer being so very small, the passengers were desirous that the captain should ride out the remainder of the gale at the quiet anchorage of the castle; but, as he was the bearer of the mail and other despatches, he could lose no time when *he* was of opinion that there were no insurmountable difficulties to be overcome. We soon experienced the reality of that hackneyed quotation,

"The wind was high on Hellas' wave;"

for scarcely had we got well clear of the protection of the high land on the north shore of the strait, and made one league into the open sea of the Mediterranean, when the blast came down from the north, and with it such a sea as nearly swamped our little boat. With much difficulty and good seamanship the vessel was rounded to under a cape opposite the *Plain of Troy*, where we were obliged to remain at anchor the whole day, while the wind and the sea were actually fair for us to lay our course, only a little too much of both to make it prudent to run on. The gentlemen were extremely desirous of landing on the shores of *Ilium*, and of taking a stroll to the bank of the Scamander or to the tomb of Achilles; but the sea was too rough and the breakers too dangerous for a small boat to venture to the shore.

All that we could see from the deck was an immense unbroken plain, with Mount Ida in the background, covered with snow.

No "*stately courts*" nor "*domes of equal beauty and of polished stones*" there met my eye. All was as deserted and desolate as

> "When ruin'd Troy became the Grecians' prey,
> And Ilium's lofty towers in ashes lay;"

reminding me of the touching account of Æneas, where he describes

> "An empire from its old foundations rent,
> And every wo the Trojans underwent.
> A populous city made a desert place," &c., &c.

Towards sunset the weather became more favourable for landing, and some of the passengers held a council, to prevail, if possible, on our captain to wait until morning, in order that they might land, if for one hour only, on the site of Troy. But the more wary seaman saw in the weather signs of coming events that would render our situation very perilous before morning, the wind being *on shore;* in vetoing their resolution, I fancied his negation couched in the following terms:

> "In free debate, my friends, your sentence speak,
> For *me*, I move before the morning break,
> To raise our anchor (camp), too dangerous here our post,
> Far from Troy's walls, and on a naked coast."

Having had a previous proof of his determined spirit, I deemed it best to retire for the night and bid adieu to Troy.

The cold obliged me to ask for some fire in my cabin. The servant not taking the usual precaution to burn the charcoal sufficiently before placing it there, the most fatal consequences had nearly ensued, and, but for the ever-watchful eye of Captain Ford, I should not have survived to tell the tale.

When I was about retiring, my husband went on deck to smoke a pipe with the gentlemen. The atmosphere of

my little cabin becoming completely exhausted of its vital principle by the action of the charcoal, I gradually felt a stupor coming over me, which I imputed to the rough jerking of the vessel at anchor, and hastened to prepare for bed; suddenly I fell senseless upon the floor. Either the noise I made in falling, or a slight groan, or perhaps the smell of the vapour from the charcoal, exciting the attention of the captain, he could not refrain from bursting open the door, when he discovered me in a situation of great agony. He instantly removed the fire and opened the window. The circumstance immediately becoming known, all persons on board seemed to vie with each other in producing restoratives; but it was a long time before I could be recovered; a few minutes longer, and I must inevitably have perished.

Next morning found us running up the ample bay of Smyrna, with its picturesque mountainous shore on one side, and its immense marshes on the other, covered with their *hills* of sea-salt.

We anchored too late to debark that afternoon; and the same night the snowstorm, which we thought to have left behind us in the Marmora, came driving across the mountains of Asia Minor, whitening all the ground about this city, a circumstance which is said to be of very rare occurrence here. Next morning we found ourselves surrounded by a number of vessels of war, of various nations, among which was our own old *Constitution*, Commodore Elliot, with a flaunting French seventy-four beside her, trying to look very terrible; but "I guess," as Jonathan says, she'd find her match in "Old Ironsides." It was now so long since I had seen anything so immediately connected with America, that I gazed on this veteran of the sea with feelings of peculiar pleasure; nor could I repress the tear and sigh of regret, that her sails (which were then being unfurled for departure) were not to waft me to that dear distant land.

The gentlemen sent their cards to the commodore, who immediately ordered his barge to shore, with an invitation for them to come on board.

Smyrna is beautifully situated at the head of a fine bay, and rises, like an amphitheatre from the sea, up the side of a high hill, at the summit of which is an immense old castle of the early Genoese times.

There is also to be seen a small fragment of the ancient church of St. John, one of the seven churches of Asia spoken of in Revelations.

The interior of the town I have not yet visited. The first object to which the gentlemen directed their attention was that of chartering a vessel to take us to Egypt; and they have just succeeded in obtaining a small Austrian brig of about one hundred tons, and have given orders to have her put in good condition, with a comfortable cabin to be built in her hold, as the present one is entirely too small.

I am this moment unexpectedly called upon to co-operate in certain matters relative to our approaching sea-voyage. Before I return to you again, I hope I may be able to pick up something that will be interesting to you. Until then,

Adieu.

LETTER VI.

Effectual Justice.—Tomb of Tantalus.—The Masonic Arch.—Lady Gamesters.—Travelling Arrangements.

Smyrna, ——.

The weather since the first day of our arrival has entirely changed, and for several days we have had a bright sunshine.

The first thing that attracted my attention here was the singular mixture of nations, languages, and costumes which is met with in the streets. The same is common to all the East, but nowhere in so great a degree as at Smyrna, where it appears to have reached the very acme of Babylonish confusion.

You can scarcely name a people that have not their representatives here; yet in this city, where the composition of the population is so heterogeneous, I have observed less frequent occurrence of riots and disturbances than in almost any of the numerous western cities that I have visited. This, I presume, proceeds from the fear of punishment, which is known to be so severe and summary. The forfeit for a trifling crime is often the head of the offender; in any other case the bastinado is well applied, and in either case punishment follows the motion of a finger from him who awards it without judge or jury. In Western Europe as well as with us, vagabonds and agrarians approach the line of the law as nearly as they dare, without too frequently overstepping it; they generally avoid compromising themselves, and are very insolent and assuming. But here it is *autre chose;* there is no law to say when the bastinado shall descend or not among them, and no tardy process suspends the wholesome corrective.

As there is nothing inviting in the interior of this modern representative of the birthplace of Homer, "the crown of Ionia" and the "ornament of Asia," we immediately commenced our excursions to its delightful environs.

We first rode up to the ancient castle or Acropolis, a stronghold of the most early ages; and the various styles of architecture, from that of the Cyclopean period to the Moorish manner of Genoese fortification, are here seen in the immense circuit of its walls. The interior area is quite empty, and it is entirely vaulted underneath with cisterns, to contain rain-water for the supply of the former garrisons.

From this point we could easily distinguish the outlines of the ancient stadium, theatre, and other monuments of the Roman era.

Since the time when St. John addressed the seven churches of Asia, Smyrna has been the football of almost every conqueror from all parts of Asia and Europe. Even Tamerlane was attracted from beyond the Caspian by the renown of its wealth and grandeur. It has often been entirely demolished, but the "Flower of Ionia" could never be annihilated. The more it has been trampled upon, the more it has flourished. "Ten times destroyed, she has ten times risen from her ruins with new splendour." The view from the castle is one of extraordinary magnificence, even here, in this land of splendid prospects and picturesque scenery. The head of the bay, which is thirty miles long, is terminated by a vast plain, extending far inland among hills and up the valley. Through the gorge of the distant mountains is the caravan road to the interior of Asia Minor, and, according to authentic history, the ancient commercial route from here to Samarcand, and thence to China, with a branch road to India, this being a more quiet and uninterrupted route from the Great East to the Western World than through the then turbulent countries of the ever-quarrelling Chaldees, Egyptians, and Jews.

I have seen caravans coming in here from *Persia*, laden with various valuable products of that and more distant regions, preferring now this long land route rather than go aside to the nearer sea of ancient Phœnicia, and there be subject to the exorbitant exactions of its present Egyptian conqueror.

Descending from the castle hill on the farther side, we visited the great ancient aqueduct which has always supplied and does still supply the city with water. We next rode to the banks of the little river where ancient story says the author of the Iliad was born.

Returning to the city, we crossed one of the ancient sites of Smyrna, and saw many vestiges of fine buildings.

Next day we took a boat, accompanied by some American friends resident here, who conducted us across the bay to the site of the ancient *Tantalus*, the capital of the ancestors of Agamemnon, situated on the summit and side of Mount Siphylus.

I found in the Smyrna Gazette an account of a late visit to the ruins by the admiral of the French fleet, now here; and, in lieu of any remarks of my own, I will translate it for you:

"There exist in the environs of Smyrna, on the declivity of Mount Siphylus, very extensive ruins, which are rarely visited by travellers. The city which occupied this site was, however, governed by one of the most celebrated kings of antiquity. This king was great-grandfather of Agamemnon, and father of Pelops. He lived one hundred and fifty years before the Trojan war. His tomb, which was visited by Pausanias, and to which tradition preserves the name of the '*Tomb of Tantalus*,' exists to this day almost entire. This monument, which was constructed more than three thousand years ago, is, therefore, one of the most ancient works of man. The city where reigned Tantalus first bore the name of *Tantalus*. It was afterward called *Siphylus*. Pelops, son of Tantalus, was driven from his throne and kingdom by Hylas, king of Phrygia.

"He took refuge in the *Peloponnesus*, and was the trunk from which proceeded all the branches of the illustrious family of the Pelopides.

"A violent earthquake overthrew a part of the city about two thousand years ago.

"A lake was formed in its place, which exists to this day. But the citadel received no damage, and these ancient works have come down to our age.

"On the summit of the mountain are seen all the ram-

parts nearly entire : a *fosse* cut in the rock, and the gate of the Acropolis, which conducted to the esplanade where was situated the temple. At the foot of the hill of the Acropolis the plateau is covered with ruins of walls, and from distance to distance are to be seen the terraces which supported the declivity of the streets. All these constructions are of stone, without mortar or cement.

" The tomb of Tantalus is of the description called by the ancients tumuli. It is finished with a circular basement of Pelasgic workmanship. In the centre is a great chamber, in which was deposited the body of the king. Travellers and friends of the arts owe a great debt of gratitude to Admiral *Massieu de Clerval*, who caused the sepulchral chamber to be completely excavated, in a manner which permits it to be examined in all its parts. It is a hall of cut stone, vaulted *en ogive*, but of which all the layers are placed *horizontally;* the *arch* not being known at that distant epoch.

" The tomb of Tantulus overlooks the Necropolis of Siphylus, in which are still to be seen nineteen *tumuli*, more or less in good preservation, but which have been opened and despoiled, probably by the Romans.

" In comparing the position of these ruins with what is said of them by ancient geographers and historians, such as Strabo, Pausanias, Pliny, &c., it is beyond all doubt that these ruins belong to the city of Siphylus ; that is to say, one of the most ancient cities of Asia Minor."

The peculiar form of the masonry of this tomb goes to show its extreme antiquity ; for, although in the shape of an *arch*, yet the layers of stone are all *horizontal*, each one projecting a little beyond the one under it ; and the sides of the chamber, approaching each other, at last meet at the top, with a flat stone cover ; the inner ends of the stones being cut to a line, no one would suppose that it was not a real *masonic arch*, with its abutments and *keystones*. From this

and similar monuments found in Greece, it has been deduced that the *masonic arch* was not known in that age. The total absence of arches which is said to exist in the *Thebaid* adds no weight, however, to that theory, as it is well known that the temples of Egypt, copied from those of Nubian and Indian subterranean temples, did not admit of arches. This, however, is a subject on which learned "doctors disagree," and it would ill become a tyro in the science of architecture like myself to venture on that "debateable ground;" yet all have a right to an opinion of their own, who give to that interesting question the attention which it merits. For I hold it to be quite as pleasing a subject of inquiry—that of establishing the period when the *arch* was first invented, and giving the credit where it justly belongs—as that of determining who were the earliest cultivators of the art of painting or of sculpture.

Who that ever contemplated the noble dome of St. Paul's, the splendid arch of Napoleon, or admired the beautiful arcades of Westminster Abbey, or the Norman cathedrals of France, or crossed the noble bridges that span the Thames and the Seine, but must feel indebted to the mind that first originated, and the hand that first executed, that most beautiful and bold conception of the architectural science?

So common has become the use, and so easy and simple the construction of an *arch*, from the humble *kitchen-oven* to the *immense firmament of St. Peter's*, from a common sewer to the gigantic tunnel of the Thames, or from the petty *road-culvert* to the splendid *aqueduct of Nismes*, that we are not sufficiently impressed with the importance and utility of the lesser, or the grandeur and sublimity of the greater.

Just as from the reading of our *primers* to the study of the most abstruse science, we rarely give sufficient credit to the immortal inventor of the art of *printing*. Or as the mariner, when he walks in triumph over the trackless deep, guided by the mysterious and unerring power of the *mag-*

netic needle, little heeds how short the time since his benighted race groped their uncertain way by the imperfect indications of the *astrolabe*, or, in earlier times, timidly crept from cape to promontory and from isle to isle, never daring to lose sight of land.

But, as we ladies can never be *freemasons*, why need you or I care any more about this proud trophy of theirs, than whether their charter dates from the *Jews*, or had its origin (as I believe) with the far more ancient *Pelasgi;* or whether the first royal arch commander of their tribe was a *Cyclops* or a *Solomon?* I think I hear you say, away with all such *bas bleu*-ism, and talk to me rather of shawls and robes, turbans and slippers, pearls and emeralds. Talk of Circassians and Georgians, hareems and baths, sherbets and sweetmeats, pipes and coffee. I would reply to your impatience by desiring you to wait until I get farther into the *East*, and become more familiar with those sweet appliances of Oriental luxury.

Here in Smyrna the modes of the *Rue Vivienne* and *De la Paix* are struggling for the ascendency with the fast expiring picturesque costumes of the Greek islands. Of this I have lately had some experience at several *réunions*, both of the European residents and native Greeks. Each alternate week throughout the winter there are assemblies held at the foreign and Greek *casinos* or assembly-rooms. There being no carriages here, ladies are obliged to go to the balls in sedan chairs. I saw a great variety of costumes, many of them very rich and beautiful. There is one headdress universally worn by the Greek ladies here. It is a scarlet felted cap, set on one side of the head, and confined to it by their long hair, which is plaited and brought round the front and fastened behind. The cap is turned up about two inches, and on this part is a wreath of gold work; on the crown is a golden ornament, and pendant from the centre is a tassel twelve or sixteen inches long, and about as

thick as the wrist, composed of various materials; sometimes all *gold* or *pearls*, and frequently having a large number of *diamonds* mixed with the latter. The tassel used on ordinary occasions is made of blue silk. The cap is called a *fez*, and, when tastefully put on, is the most unique, graceful, and coquetish thing of the kind I have ever seen. Having had a fine gold tassel presented to me by a Greek lady, and one of pearls by my husband, I could do no less than get several of these caps, in order to utilize my presents. At these balls quadrilles and waltzes are the only dances. In the rooms leading from the *Salle* were several gaming-tables, around which I observed ladies crowding with quite as much *empressement* as the gentlemen, and they played as deeply. I observed them take out gold pieces, *rouleau* after *rouleau*, which would disappear immediately. I am told they often win or lose many thousands of piastres in an evening.

After the ball of last evening we supped at the house of a very worthy family from our own country, settled here, and I have seen nothing so comfortable in all the East as their snug American fireside. This, like all the other cities of the East, is not lighted at night; and when persons go out, they are obliged to be preceded by lanterns. This city is very subject to earthquakes; and, since we have been here, several slight shocks have been felt, although unperceived by me. There are many things about this place and its environs that I have not seen, owing to the extreme cold weather. We have quite as much as we can do to keep warm for the most part of the time, and should have been off some days ago had our vessel been ready to receive us. We sail to-morrow evening, after the daily "*inbat*" or sea-breeze shall have fallen. We shall, no doubt, visit this place again, as one can scarcely ever get out of the East without taking Smyrna in the way.

We are now all ready to embark in the morning, with a

good vessel, though *very small*, plenty of good stores, and an excellent French cook whom we found here. It would much amuse you to see the preparation required to ensure comfort for so short a voyage, after seeing with what little heed people embark every day on board our New-York packet ships for an Atlantic voyage. All they have to look to is a good supply of linen (an affair of twenty-four hours), and they are ready. They know that the ship has a full supply of cabin, bedroom, pantry, table, and kitchen furniture; that the steward has taken care that the larder, coops, and the pens are well supplied with dead and live stock, and the pantries well stored with all kinds of wines and liquors, preserves and fruits; in short, every article of table luxury that is susceptible of being taken to sea. Now here it is *autre chose, tout a fait.* First a suitable vessel is to be found, then an examination into her character and sea-worthiness, and into the character of the master (for one might here get hold of an old pirate). Next a bargain is to be made; then one is obliged, in order to be satisfied of personal safety, to go on board and examine the vessel's rigging, and to see that she has spare sails, &c. This is absolutely necessary, for this small class of vessels in these seas generally belong to those who navigate them, and who, being very poor, merely "*get along*" with the least possible expenditure, and make all the old odds and ends last until they are blown away. The vessel has to be thoroughly cleaned, and beds and bedding provided. After which comes the long bill of the chandler, who furnishes the table stores; next the cook must see that he has a suitable fireplace and fuel separate from the crew, and also that he has suitable coops, and these well filled, and his larder and pantry well stored. All the crockery and kitchen utensils have to be provided. In short, every article that is required by a packet ship for the maintenance and comfort of her passengers, must be here found by, and at the expense of, those who would un-

dertake the shortest voyage. In such semi-barbarous countries as these, much more time and trouble, and treble the expense, are required for a comfortable fit-out than in the Atlantic ports. The only advantage is in the extremely low rate that a vessel and crew can be obtained for per month. Our brig has a master, mate, and crew of six men, and we have chartered it for two hundred dollars per month. Our charter permits us to retain the vessel as long as we please, and to take her anywhere within the Straits of Gibraltar, or to discharge her on our arrival at Alexandria, on paying two hundred and fifty dollars for the trip. She sails under Austrian colours, and hails from Trieste, of which place the master is a native. The remainder of the *equipage*, I suppose, may be of all nations. Her name is the "*Snami Bog*" ("*God with us*"). Under such protection we can have nothing to fear, even should our Captain "*Landsman*" prove but an indifferent *seaman*.

While you may be sitting by your own comfortable fireside at home, I pray you to think of your friend who is roaming in these distant lands, and tossing upon the great deep at this most tempestuous season, and in these dangerous seas. And when you approach the family altar to return thanks for the manifold blessings you are enjoying, and to solicit a continuance of them, may you, in your aspirations to the throne of grace, never forget your wandering friend; and may our mutual prayers be heard and answered by that overruling Providence in whose hand we all are.

Again, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

LETTER VII.

Arrival at Alexandria.—Perils of the Sea.—An awkward Situation.—Temple of Serapis.—Quarantine Regulations.—A bitter Disappointment.—Harbour of Alexandria.—Arrival of Pilgrims.

Alexandria (Egypt), ——.

It is now more than a week that we have been quietly riding at anchor *in quarantine*, in the ancient port of Alexandria, and I have scarcely yet recovered from the fatigue and excitement which I experienced during the most perilous sea-voyage I have ever made. My nerves still feel the sad effects of the powerful shock, and all I can yet realize is, that I am now here alive to tell the tale of another fortunate escape from those elements which seem to have conspired for our destruction.

We left Smyrna in the evening with a gentle land-breeze; the appearance of the city from the water was extremely interesting, as there was then a *fête* being celebrated by the Turks, and all the minarets of the mosques were beautifully illuminated to their very summits; besides other illuminations in different parts of the city, which rises like an amphitheatre from the shore. Next morning we found ourselves becalmed, and were obliged to come to anchor, where we remained for twenty-four hours. The following morning a slight breeze enabled us to get down to the Straits of Scio, where we lost another day by contrary winds. This delay we did not so much regret, as it procured for us a rich treat, that of viewing leisurely the shores of the beautiful island of Scio.

About sunset the western sky presented to us a very extraordinary appearance, and we perceived it caused so much alarm to our captain and crew, that they would have

made for a port had not the gentlemen protested against it. After dark such was the state of the weather that we all would gladly have taken shelter were it not then impossible. The storm—but I fear that you will attribute all my stories of storms, gales, and escapes to a natural timidity on my part, and will consider my accounts of them as much exaggerated as you may suppose my fears to have been groundless. Now I do not lay claim to any extraordinary degree of heroism, but I flatter myself that I have my share of courage and presence of mind under trying circumstances and in ordinary cases of danger. I am always well on shipboard, and am very fond of the sea. I am not sufficiently acquainted with nautical tactics, or with the phenomena of the elements, to be aware of the presence of extraordinary dangers unless they are pointed out to me; but when I see the stoutest hearts quail, and the oldest seamen feel the horrors of despair, 'tis then that I can appreciate, as well as another, the extent of the immediate danger. Instead, therefore, of giving you my own account of our late voyage, I will merely quote from a few notes made by my husband the day after our arrival here.

"After passing the island of Scio, the wind headed us; we then endeavoured to weather the island of Nicaria, in order to get more sea-room, and go to windward of Patmos and Cos. We spent the forenoon in fruitless endeavours to effect this object, and found that our vessel could not make way to windward, but fell off to leeward, being too flat-bottomed to hold her own on a wind. At 3 P.M., the weather being thick and a storm threatening, our captain desired to make a port in Scio, which we opposed. At 5 P.M. the wind suddenly came round to the north, blowing very fresh. We then bore away on our course, intending to make a port in Samos, if possible; but, when in the passage between Nicaria and Samos, our desire of taking advantage of the fair wind overcame the well-grounded fears

of our experienced captain, and we imprudently obliged him to run by the haven where we should have at least remained until next morning to watch the weather. We went through the passage between Cos and the mainland at a tremendous rate, but were fortunately favoured with daylight until we cleared its crooked channel.

"Night coming on, the wind increased to a gale, when we became desirous of coming to under the lee of a headland, but it was found to be out of our reach. The more the gale increased, the more our anxiety was heightened, on account of several small islands which lay directly in our course. In endeavouring to avoid one, we might be wrecked on another in the *total darkness* which surrounded us. About midnight we heard the dreadful roar of breakers directly ahead; but, by a timely and fortunate shifting of the helm, we avoided the impending danger, and found ourselves in a moment running close by the small island of Scarpanto, the last of the group. We were much excited by this narrow escape, though relieved at finding we had no more islands or rocks in our path. The increasing gale and rising sea caused us to make another effort to gain a port, which could only be done by bearing up for Rhodes.

"This we attempted, but our little vessel could not stand being brought broadside to the heavy sea, and we were therefore obliged to scud before the gale. We had been running all the afternoon with nothing but the foretopsail, which we now close reefed. Another anxiety arose from the fact that, our vessel being new, the captain had never been with her in a gale, and could not say how she would act if the storm should increase.

"We had flattered ourselves with the hope that at sunrise there might be a change in our favour; but, on the contrary, the gale continued to increase. To add to our discomfort, snow and hail came down upon us at such a rate as made it almost impossible to stand on deck.

"The foreyard now began to quiver and the mast to shake; and, had they gone over, we should have been lost in a moment, as our lives depended on the small bit of canvass carrying us faster than the waves which came roaring and breaking behind us. It was with much difficulty that we could prevail upon two sailors to go aloft and place preventer braces at each end of the yard. At every roll of the vessel their feet touched the crest of a wave. The yard was at last secured, and our fears on that score were allayed. At meridian the tempest had reached its height, for no wind could blow more violently than it then did, the sea running very high, with terrific waves breaking around us, which threatened to annihilate our frail bark every moment. Never have I seen worse seas or a more terrific gale during the many passages I have made across the Atlantic; not even excepting the memorable August gale which destroyed Barbadoes, when on board the Britannia we sprung our foremast, lost most of our sails, and shifted our cargo. Our little vessel behaved exceedingly well so long as the wind continued steady. It soon broke into flaws, which increased our danger, for, when the lull came, our sail did not carry us fast enough away from the following waves; one of which, had it come on board, would have sufficed to destroy us.

"During all the following night no one on board expected to see the morning light. The next day, however, found us running at the same wild rate. We found by our reckoning that another twenty-four hours would, at the same rate, take us to the land. Our captain now being much alarmed at the prospect of reaching the low coast of Egypt in thick weather, perhaps at night, when, during clear weather, the coast cannot be seen ten miles off, he would have laid the vessel to if he dared; but that was impossible; she would have capsized if he had ventured to put her about. She was still running at so tremendous a rate that certain destruction awaited us if we could not succeed in arresting her flight.

The wind now blew a perfect tornado, but the hail that accompanied it knocked down the sea. We then got a cable ready to put over the stern, in order to impede her onward progress; but, soon after, the wind shifting a little to the westward, enabled us to bear away for the coast of Syria, where the land is *high*, with two good harbours of easy access. By thus altering our course we placed another whole day's run between us and the land, thus giving the gale more time to subside. We ran all that day towards Syria, but at sunset the gale at last abated, so that we were enabled to lay the vessel to in safety, after sixty hours of breathless anxiety and of the most painful excitement. The next morning found us becalmed to the southward of Cyprus, where we lay two days. The wind springing up from the eastward, we again made sail for our port; but the vessel making so much lee-way, we fell to leeward of it, and found ourselves in Arab's bay, twenty miles to the westward of Alexandria. Six more days we were baffling about between Cyprus and Egypt, endeavouring to get to windward; but our unfortunate flat-bottomed boat could do nothing on a wind. Had not the timidity of our captain caused him to alter his course when he did, we might have made the run from Scio to this port in three days; the whole voyage occupied twelve. On our arrival we found that the gale had been felt more severely than any storm ever experienced here before. Several vessels foundered at anchor in the eastern harbour. I should like to hear if, when our old captain and his crew return to Trieste, they will keep their promises to the *Madonna*, and present her with all the great candles which they have vowed to her during their late tribulation. The captain, besides forswearing meat for ever hereafter on *Thursday* (the day we came near going to the bottom), vowed a wax candle as large as his leg to his favourite Madonna."

I should not have troubled you with this long extract, but

would have condensed the whole into a few general remarks, had I not been desirous of giving you the impressions and opinions of another more experienced in sea matters, and much more capable of understanding our true situation than myself.

We are now safe at anchor in the inner port of Alexandria; but I hope that I shall not so soon forget the many dangers I have escaped since I first embarked on these tempestuous eastern seas, as to overlook that it is to a kind and overruling Providence that I owe my preservation amid so many and such imminent dangers.

The first object which I descried when approaching the shores of Egypt, and long before the coast could be seen from the masthead, was an immense high mound, crowned with fortifications. This must be the artificial hill on which formerly stood the great temple of *Serapis*, with its colossal columns and obelisks; and after it was destroyed by the bigoted fury of the early Christians, its commanding site, no doubt, was occupied as a Roman stronghold, and passed in succession to Saracen, Turk, French, and English; and now the Albanian soldier of fortune uses it to overawe his Egyptian subjects.

Approaching nearer the coast, we next descried another mound similar to the former, though not so high, which we afterward found to be contiguous to the port. It was built in order to command the harbour, by the modern Alexander of France, at the time of his abortive attempt to conquer the East.

A paltry lantern now represents the ancient *Pharos*, and a "shingle palace" the marine villa of Cleopatra. When close in shore, so that we could discover the houses, I perceived that they were all flat-roofed and terraced, after the manner of the East. To me, who had never yet seen this style of building, the houses seemed as if the late hurricane had unroofed them all at once. In Constantinople

the houses have peaked roofs, on account of the snow and rain. In Smyrna they build in the same manner, because it is the fashion in the capital.

At the entrance of the old or western harbour of Alexandria there is a reef of rocks (some of which appear above water) extending from the main land quite to the western point of the ancient island of Pharos, with several deep though narrow passes between them. When once inside this barrier, there is found one of the safest ports in the Mediterranean Sea, completely sheltered, and as quiet as a millpond. It is here that we have now been at anchor for several days, and have a few more yet to try our patience before our quarantine probation will be at an end. This is one of the vexations to which travellers are subjected in these regions. Had we not been provided with a clean bill of health at Smyrna (there being no cases of plague there at the time of our sailing), or had we a cargo of susceptible goods, we should not consider our case so hard a one, and should submit with all due patience to a wholesome and prudent regulation. But being entirely free from disease, with no cargo on board, and having had quarantine enough during a voyage of twelve days, we certainly expected to be admitted immediately on our arrival into free *pratique*. But the Solomons of the *Sanita* gave their judgment against us. It has been hinted that the present quarantine is a sort of commercial and political retaliation for similar grievances inflicted on their commerce at Smyrna, when circumstances made them quite unnecessary. We have just been informed that, through the interference and influence of our worthy consul Mr. Gliddon, Senior, the term of our imprisonment has been reduced from eighteen to eleven days, the shortest possible term allowed to the discretion of the board of health. But the storms at sea, and the vexations of an unnecessary and arbitrary quarantine, are all as naught when compared with the mortifying disappointment which we experienced

on our arrival here, and one that has destroyed at one fell blow all my long-cherished hopes of seeing the *great East.*

We arrived too late for the Bombay steamer, she having left for Suez some time since. Now I met our first disappointment heroically, so long as I felt assured that the way through Egypt was open for us. But this last is "*the unkindest cut of all.*" It will be five or six months before another opportunity offers to reach India, and who knows what may turn up in the interval to make me lose that most interesting part of our tour in the East? Were this the proper season to travel in Palestine, we could go there first, and then return and visit Egypt, and be ready for the May steamer to Bombay; but by so doing we should entirely reverse the regular order of things. The winter in Palestine is cold and rainy, and the spring extremely hot and generally unhealthy in Egypt, and the river too low for navigation as far up as we wish to go. I must therefore take example from the gentlemen, who bear their disappointment manfully; yet, as for them, they can accomplish that journey at any other time; but when once I get home again, not all the "*gardens of Gul*" nor the "*vale of Cashmere*" would induce me again to leave it to revisit the East.

Without indulging in unavailing regrets, but endeavouring to smother my disappointment, I shall content myself with enjoying the present, and let the future take care of itself. If I should finally be prevented from visiting India, why, what with Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor, I shall have an ample field whereon to reap a rich harvest, and be enabled to lay up a never-failing store of reminiscences of the East; then, with Greece, Sicily, and Italy, I shall return home contented. Adieu, then, for ever to regrets! It is all in vain, I find, to make calculations so far ahead, for "*L'homme propose, et Dieu dispose.*"

Now, then, for Egypt; but stay, the city of Alexander is *not* in Egypt. The Libyan Desert claims her, and, but for

the *canal*, which brings the waters of the Nile forty miles to her walls, she would long ago have been smothered in the stifling embraces of the moving sands, and antiquaries would now be disputing about the identity of her site. By means of this canal, *vegetation* is produced and maintained around the city, arresting and fixing the volatile particles of sand brought by the western winds from the Libyan Desert.

The beautiful *palm groves* which I see from the deck are all supported by irrigation; and I can hear the incessant creaking of the *Persian wheel* day and night.

When the first keen edge of disappointment was blunted against the steel armour of our philosophy, we set about utilizing the tedious term of our "durance vile." Along with the stores we received at Smyrna was a fresh supply of books from London and Paris, relating to the East, which, together with our previous provision, gives us a complete travelling library of over 100 volumes, all pertinent to the subjects most likely to command our attention in these regions. My time here has been occupied in reading, writing, and observing the curious and busy scenes by which we are surrounded. The number of foreign vessels now anchored near to us, in the harbour, is about one hundred, besides which here is the principal part of the fleet of Mohammed Ali, with the star and crescent waving at their peaks. The sound of martial music which proceeds from them, with the occasional discharge of their great guns, and the incessant plying of the boatswain's shrill whistle, piping all hands to their duties, tend much to enliven the scene. Then there is the more busy and peaceful employment on board the numerous trading vessels, some discharging, others receiving their freights, to the merry time of "Yo, heave yo!" while the country boats constantly passing and repassing, with their enormous lateen sails spread to catch every breeze, and loaded with cotton and other produce, give a picturesque effect to the whole.

When I turn my eyes to the shore, the scene, though not so varied, is more interesting; our anchorage is immediately under the guns of the fort made by Napoleon. A beautiful grove of palm-trees next arrests my attention, with their fanlike branches waving in the air. A little beyond, and towering above the grove, is that stately monument of antiquity, miscalled "Pompey's Pillar." A very animated and Oriental scene constantly presents itself along the beach, produced by the numerous caravans of camels kneeling to receive their burdens, and then, with their slow and measured step, moving off in "Indian file" through the arched gateway into the city, conducted by Egyptian fellahs in their peculiar costume.

On another side of the harbour is the navy-yard of the pacha, where I can see a number of large ships on the stocks, and others undergoing repairs, some of them of enormous size.

Within a day or two we have been permitted to row about the harbour with a "guardiano," much to our amusement; for thus we have obtained a nearer view of many distant objects, which had excited our curiosity simply from the imperfect view we had of them.

Thus has our time been occupied, and, I think, not without some profit.

Besides an occasional oar's-length visit from our consul, we are daily favoured with the company of a much more interesting personage to us at present, a sort of long-shore, half-and-half Arab, Greek, Italian, and Turk, yclept a "*Spendidore*," whose business it is to *spend* our money for such matters as we may require for our table. In addition to the more substantial articles, many are the fine bunches of ripe *bananas*, and branches loaded with *luscious oranges*, he daily presents to the "*signora*," with many compliments in his *lingua Franca* dialect. Within a day or two several vessels have arrived from the coast of Barbary, freighted

with pilgrims on their way to *Mecca*. They are of the Bedouin tribes who inhabit the regions around Mount *Atlas;* and if their *Numidian* progenitors were not a less ill-favoured and savage-looking race, the soldiers of *Massinissa* need have brought no other weapons into the field than their own hatchet faces. No enemy could withstand the glances of their demon eyes, and not quail beneath their fiendlike expression of countenance. They bring with them various productions of their own country, besides some of those of Morocco and the adjacent regions, which they intend to exchange at Mecca against Oriental articles, brought by equally holy pilgrims from the opposite point of the compass; each one realizing a good profit both ways. Thus making out very conveniently to serve both *God and mammon* at the same time, and to drive a very advantageous bargain with the *good and evil principle*, by propitiating both at once.

We shall have *pratique* in two or three days, when we shall land immediately on that shore towards which my longing eyes have been impatiently turned for many days past; and if the old Alexandria, or its modern representative, should present anything that might interest you, I will endeavour to record it for your amusement. The result of my observations will accompany the above by the next steamer to London. Without bidding you adieu, I will now refer you to my next. Until then,

AU REVOIR.

LETTER VIII.

Alexandria as it was.—Temple of Serapis.—Ancient Magnificence.—The Alexandrine Library.—Cleoptara's Needles.—Pompey's Pillar.—The Catacombs.

Alexandria, ——.

Two days after my last we obtained *pratique*, since which all my time has been sedulously employed in roaming over the city of Alexander, of Ptolemy, and Cleopatra, and luxuriating among the interesting remains of its early grandeur. With the exception of the very few existing Grecian and Roman monuments at Constantinople (the whole area of the ancient city being now covered with the wooden houses of the Turks), I have as yet seen but little from which to form a correct idea of the great architectural magnificence of those empires. Although even here there are no monuments that are not in a complete state of ruin, and almost entirely destroyed, yet three quarters of the site of the ancient city of Alexandria remain unencumbered by modern constructions; and the immense excavations going on in every part of the ancient site at the present day, give to those who have the good fortune now to be here a great advantage over any former visiters of modern times. Until quite lately, all presented to the view of the curious traveller were mounds of earth, indicative of some hidden interesting object beneath, the sight of which was denied them.

What with the bigotry and ignorance of the early Christians, and the fanaticism of the Saracen conquerors, the city of the Ptolemies went down quite as rapidly as it rose to the zenith of its glory. But if no other causes but those I have mentioned had contributed to its downfall, we should now, no doubt, be able to walk through the porticoes of the li-

brary and the halls of Cleopatra's palace, repose under the stately domes of the cathedral of St. Athanasius, and still admire those few splendid pagan temples which were spared by the intolerant Christians, and converted by them into churches. The former, perhaps, now transformed by the Turks into an arsenal, the second into a seraglio, and the others into mosques or mausoleums for their departed sovereigns.

St. Sophia and her sister churches would now have many a proud rival, wearing the degrading chains of the triumphant crescent. But, alas! a power greater, and even more relentless, than the worst of her conquerors, suddenly arrived to complete the work of destruction. The *earthquake* not only precipitated her towering domes and obelisks, her colonnades, her palaces and baths, into shapeless masses of ruin, but the very foundations of the city were undermined, and the ruins sunk deep below their former level: her marine villas, her quays and their appurtenances, were ingulfed by the sea.

Even such a state of chaos as then existed would have left enough of the accumulated magnificence of centuries of commercial ascendency and imperial grandeur, to dazzle the eyes of moderns, unaccustomed as we are to behold so much architectural sumptuousness as was at one time here displayed. But the ravager came: first Rome composed many a proud temple from the spoils of the unfortunate city, plundering her temples of the columns of granite and porphyry, her palaces and her baths of their rich marbles and alabasters; yet leaving a plentiful field for the gleanings of the Venetian, the Genoese, and the Turk. For more than a thousand years was this immense quarry explored by the nations, and rich was the reward that crowned their enterprises.

Rome of the emperors, in her turn overthrown by the Goths, has been despoiled by Rome of the *church*. Into

whose possession the marbles and granites of the Ptolemies shall next pass, who can say?

The present city proper does not cover one quarter of the area within the present walls, which appear to have been built many centuries ago. They are of Moorish, or rather of Saracenic fashion.

Even were there no cannon in existence, it would require, I should suppose, ten times the present amount of population to man their extensive defences. A few gardens, numerous ancient ruins and mounds, fill up the remainder of the area. By some it is thought the present walls are on the site of those of the ancient city; but if that be true, then the accounts of the vast extent of the ancient city cannot be correct, unless there were *extensive* suburbs; and the immense quantity of ruins without the walls favours the supposition. On the high mound in the centre of the field of ruins, history tells us, once stood the magnificent temple of *Serapis*, with its splendid portico of polished red granite columns, the immense size of which is indicated by that stupendous monument, called by many Pompey's Pillar. Such were the imposing grandeur of this temple, and the mysterious veneration in which was held the Pontine deity enshrined within its sacred walls, that the Alexandrines at one time prided themselves in calling their capital "the city of Serapis." When the great and last shock of the ancient and modern religions was felt, the temple of Serapis was converted into a fortress, in which the priests and votaries of expiring Paganism took refuge. But the furious army of the church militant besieged them in their last stronghold, when at length this colossal and splendid effort of pagan architecture fell a prey to Christian barbarism. Not satisfied with dethroning the offending deity, prostrating his idol court, dragging through the streets their mutilated limbs, and driving into the desert the benighted votaries of the ancient religion, the enthusiasts of the new doctrine, like all new converts, vied with each other

in destroying all traces of the rival religion : and, had they confined their bigoted fury to the "stocks and stones" before which the multitudes had bowed, then the work of regeneration might have been more in accordance with those mild doctrines of the cross which, in their mistaken zeal, they were endeavouring to enforce by fire and sword. To the shame of the new religion, it is recorded that an archbishop of the fourth century of our era led the van of that destroying army of ignorant and intolerant bigots who prostrated the beautiful temple and monument of the arts from its commanding height, and converted it into a heap of confused ruins.

I doubt whether the conquering Persian, in earlier times, carried his mortal hatred of *idol worship* farther than to destroy its images and disperse its priesthood, else not a stone of the *Memnonium* or the temple of *Ammon* had now stood up in proud defence of the extreme early civilization of the pagan world. Outrivalling *Cambyses*, the barbarous and bloody *Theophilus* vented his rage upon one of the most beautiful monuments the world ever saw, and before the conquering legions of a Christian pontiff fell the splendid *Serapeum*.

After precipitating from its height of "a hundred steps" its massy columns of granite, all but one of which were shattered into fragments, and scattering its beautiful capitals and architraves of Parian marble, the pious father of the church erected on its site a new temple "in honour of the Christian martyrs."

Had the same spirit actuated a *Constantine*, that paragon of heathen temples, the Roman Pantheon, had passed into oblivion long before it was erected into a Christian church. May we not trace the hand of Providence in the preservation, to this day, of the first temple of the first Christian emperor? His beautiful *Sophia*, though often injured by the elements, and as often restored, has never been devastated by the ruth-

less hand of barbarian invaders. When the Osmanlee came, while he swept from beneath its arches the "infidel dogs" that infested it, he spared the temple which the arts had erected, and, bowing in profound admiration before its proud swelling dome, he vowed that every future Moslem temple should acknowledge this as its prototype. The mount of the Serapeum stood at the intersection of the two principal streets, which can still be traced by the mounds and ruins that extend in parallel lines for miles each way. One street ran from the seaport to the port on Lake Mareotis, a distance said to be five miles, and was *one thousand feet wide*, with a colonnade or portico on each side, for pedestrians, one hundred feet in width.

At one end of this street could at all times be seen the masts and flags of vessels of every nation, and at the opposite end those of the interior commerce of the Nile.

Another street of equal width crossed this at right angles, running parallel with the sea. What a splendid panorama must have been unfolded to all who came up to this shrine to worship. Every way the eye turned, there was a street one thousand feet wide and several miles in length! the great *Library*, the palace of the Ptolemies, and other monuments, terminating in all directions their long vistas of colonnades. I feel that I have detained you too long among the imaginary ruins of the Serapeum; yet, while standing on its elevated site, and contemplating the utter desolation which has not left upon the spot one single stone of that once proud monument, I could not refrain from execrating the barbarous spirit of the age in which it fell, and from very grief I could scarcely tear myself away from the tomb of so much departed architectural magnificence.

Descending from the mound, the first object that a traveller visits is the prostrate skeleton of that *Library*, whose *soul* was consigned to the flames of Moslem purgatory by the victorious Saracen.

Since the time when the conqueror Amru put the torch to the Ptolemaic Library, and buried its halls beneath the fallen rubbish of its lofty domes, no traveller has been enabled until now to penetrate into its hidden galleries. The excavations recently commenced, in order to procure materials for some public works, have exposed to the view of those who have the good fortune to be here at the present time, the vast vaulted chambers which once contained, not only all the Oriental and Egyptian literature amassed by a long line of Ptolemies, but, in addition, the sublimer productions of Grecian schools which were once contained in the collection of Pergamos, and presented by the enamoured Anthony to his Cleopatra.

The long drawn aisles and corridors, in whose cool shades the assembled literati of a world were wont to linger and converse, are again accessible; but perhaps, ere this reaches you, not a vestige of these interesting ruins will be left, such is the rapidity with which the last remains of the Alexandrine Library are disappearing beneath the stroke of the modern engineer. Such is the strength of the cement by which the bricks are united, that it is found impossible to separate them after a lapse of more than twenty centuries since they were piled upon each other. The walls and vaults are now being quarried out in large blocks, and transported on strong carts to the place of their new destination. An immense quantity of broken shafts, capitals and bases, are collected in a field near by, with marbles and granites enough to build a cathedral. Many of the broken columns are six feet in diameter, indicating a length of fifty to sixty feet. When leaving this spot, fraught with so many pleasing yet so many sorrowful associations, my foot struck against a fragment of a once beautiful miniature capital, with one of its volutes as perfect as when it graced one of those small pilasters that, perhaps, divided the compartments of shelves on which rested the different categories of manu-

scripts. I eagerly seized and appropriated it as a trophy, and shall retain it as an interesting memento of this great temple of ancient learning; and if, at some future day, my children, strolling among the remains of Alexandria, should seek in vain for the site of this fast dissolving ruin, they may at least have the satisfaction of saying that their mother has preserved for them one *tangible* reminiscence of this temple of the Ptolemies.

Not far from the ruins of the Library are yet to be seen the foundations and vaulted basements of the famous marine villa of Cleopatra. They are partly within the present walls, with a portion running under them into the sea; the waves dashing over them and disintegrating their parts, so that the whole shore is a bed of marble fragments of every hue, used in the mosaic floors and ceilings of the luxurious retreat of Egypt's splendid queen. It was here that she entertained her noble Roman; on this spot the hardy soldier was softened into the doting lover, the general of Roman armies into a loiterer of the hareem.

Near to this spot, and perhaps in front of the gates, stood the two fine obelisks called Cleopatra's Needles. One still stands erect upon its base, in despite of earthquakes; the other has fallen, though not broken. We measured, and found it to be about eight feet in diameter; its length is sixty-four feet, the material the fine red granite of Upper Egypt. The obelisks are covered with those mysterious symbols of an age long anterior to the first foundation of the city, and they, of course, have once stood before one of the temples of the Pharaohs. It is evident that the architects of Alexandria were indebted to the former capitals of Egypt for the materials of which the more modern capital was composed. Memphis plundered the conquered and ruined Thebes, and Alexandria rose from the prostrate ruins of imperial Memphis, the stately Sais, and the learned Heliopolis. She, in

her turn, has been transported beyond the sea, and but the shadow of her former magnificence is left.

In every direction are to be seen the tops of columns projecting from the ground, belonging to some Christian church or pagan temple buried beneath. Within a few days one of these has been entirely excavated, and proves to be of the Roman era.

Underneath the city are vaults and arches, so that the entire city may have stood on pillars. These vaults were cemented and used as cisterns to contain the waters of the Nile, which once a year, at its greatest height, was conducted hither by a canal. These vast reservoirs served for the rest of the year to supply the wants of a population of many hundreds of thousands, not only for ordinary family use, but for their innumerable private baths; besides which, there were *three thousand* public baths in constant use.

The well-shafts through which the water was drawn up in the public streets are still found at the corners, and used by the present inhabitants. In the ruins of private houses are to be seen the circular marble curbs, worn into deep channels by the action of the bucket ropes. Query: were there then no *pumps?*

This immense volume of water, after precipitating its particles of earth and other foreign matter brought down by the Nile, remains sweet, pure, and delightfully cool during the long and intense heats of summer.

Another interesting object which claims the attention of visiters to Egypt is the famous monument called "Pompey's Pillar." Who that sees it does not feel grateful to the individual who rescued its fine shaft from the general wreck of the temple of Serapis, and transmitted this stupendous monolith down to our times? It is not alone for its own individual size that I so much admire this stone, but from the association of ideas connected with it, when it formed but one link in that chain of Colossii which encircled the Sera-

peum. I have seen a larger stone than this wrought by modern hands; the shaft of the great Alexandrine monument at St. Petersburg, which is over ten feet in diameter and about ninety feet high, of red Finland granite.

This one of Egypt, although it has been so severely criticised, cannot be called a mean affair; its very immensity rescues it from that imputation; yet I must agree with the critics, that from the inferior workmanship displayed on its present capital, a very low state of the arts is indicated for the era of its erection on its present site.

It stands on the summit of a high mound, and can be descried from a great distance at sea.

Since I have been here I have frequently strolled up to this proud monument, and seated myself at its base to watch the sun setting towards that happy home in the *west* from which I am now separated by so many thousand miles of ocean and land. And, while contemplating the lengthening shadow of the column above me, I have asked myself this question: if an *individual* could raise such a stupendous monument, either to flatter the pride of an emperor or to evince his gratitude to a benefactor, what could not the combined efforts of a whole nation effect, if unanimously and patriotically bent upon one such object? There is one achievement in the annals of nations more worthy of a proud *trophy* than *all* the great political events which preceded or followed it. I mean that glorious *Revolution* which first disenthralled the human mind, and disabused it from that subtile doctrine "*The divine right of kings.*"

From the time when the first gun was fired at Lexington, to the date of that bold instrument which declared "all men *to be born* (politically) *free and equal*," down to that of our "*Magna Charta*," our own glorious *Constitution* (whose every article should be held as sacred and unchangeable as were the laws of the Persian and Mede), the whole world points to an epoch in which more was achieved for the future

development of the energies of man, than had been accomplished by patriots of all nations, in the long lapse of ages since the hard-fought field of Thermopylæ. Then why not raise a monument on our own Capitoline Mount, commensurate with the mighty deeds of our patriot fathers?

For its base I would propose the "rock of Plymouth," and each member of that proud confederacy, represented by our thirteen stars, should furnish a ponderous block of granite from her eternal hills.

The captured cannon, from whose brazen mouths the ineffectual thunder rattled through our valleys, and was hurled back in mocking echoes by our gigantic mountain barriers, I would mould into a fitting capital. In this one instance I would not heed the laws of the Ionian and Corinthian schools; but in lieu of the soft, curling volute, and the delicate acanthus, I would substitute boughs from our mighty oaks and wreaths from our evergreen pines. From the native iron of our mountains I would form a statue of "Liberty" larger than the Colossus of Rhodes; from her hand a scroll of native gold should encircle the column to its base.

The brief period of our history can furnish a bright constellation of names wherewith to inscribe it, from that of the illustrious and immortal *Washington* down to those of our great *Clintons* and *Fultons*.

The slumbering patriotism of our country is startled at the dangerous accumulation of wealth in its treasury. I pray that some mind more mighty than the rest may turn that river of gold into this new channel; then would not only the threatening calamity be averted, but the virtue of our statesmen be untempted, the memory of departed worthies honoured and glorified, and the names of present legislators be handed down in triumph to the latest posterity.

Bless me, how the barometer of one's *patriotism* rises as the distance increases from one's fatherland. I am fearful that the heavy home atmosphere you are breathing will not

permit the mercury of *your* feelings to reach a degree corresponding with my present rhapsodies; let us therefore return to subjects on which neither time nor space exerts such influence.

I do not desire that you should follow me through the dark corridors and dusty chambers of the Catacombs of Alexandria, for your disappointment would then equal my own, after an hour of painful search for the marvellous. These artificial grottoes were no doubt the necropolis of Alexandria and the earlier Racotis. They consist of vaulted chambers and passages cut in the solid stone, extending from the seashore far into the rocky strata which lies near the surface. One of the apartments is circular, with a fine dome, and niches for sarcophagi. There were neither sculptures nor paintings that I could discover; neither were there any mummies, though plenty of bones were strewed around. After groping about, sometimes erect, but oftener in a stooping position, from the accumulation of sand in the passages, we returned to the light of day less gratified than fatigued.

Besides the pacha, there are numerous private speculators who are continually turning over the accumulated rubbish of this vast field of ruin, in search merely of the most ordinary materials for building. All that had *much* value has long since disappeared, though occasionally some granite and marble columns are thrown out. The hotel at which we are staying was lately a villa belonging to an English merchant in the city. All the materials for the house and high garden wall were excavated on the premises. Fragments of columns, capitals, and friezes are fancifully worked into the garden walls and façade of the house. There is scarcely an acre of ground that will not furnish sufficient materials from far beneath the surface to build a large mansion.

The modern city of Alexandria is scarcely worthy of your attention. What little there is of it seems to shrink from the area of the old city, and occupies an artificial mole

that extends from the mainland to the little island opposite, and with it forms a T. To the east and west of the town are the new and old harbours. The island is occupied by a marine villa of the pacha, the navy-yard, and a village of mud huts for the families of those employed there.

There has been lately commenced a new street, beginning at the edge of the mainland and extending in the direction of the old city. It is of very ample width, and has a row of houses in the French style on each side. Most of the foreign merchants and diplomatists there reside, and form a pleasant European circle, in which the traveller is cordially received and very hospitably entertained.

Some of our rides in the environs extended as far as that sharply-contested field where two hostile nations of the West met in deadly conflict; the field where Abercrombie closed his eyes as the victorious banner of England was raised above the fallen eagles of France.

Having finished with Alexandria, and gratified, far beyond my anticipations, with its monuments, its ruins, and its appropriate site, yet I do not feel as if I have yet reached "the land of Egypt."

This cannot be an *Egyptian* city. It never was. A Greek conqueror was its founder, who built his splendid capital upon the site of a former Greek trading town. In its best estate it could only have been considered as a beautiful Propylon, standing in advance of the great ancient temple *Egypt*, and in comparison with the immense antiquity of the latter but a modern work; more elegantly classic in its proportions and ornament, though falling far short of the majestic and mysterious grandeur of the principal edifice.

I am impatient to get to the *Great River;* to feel myself floating upon those waters which, after rising in vapours from the salt sea now before me, float in mid air, and are carried by the winds to the mountains of the tropics; there condensed among their high and chilly peaks, to descend in

torrents upon the plains of Ethiopia. Thence rushing by the cavern temples of Nubia, leaping over the granite ridges of Syene, they divide the Theban capital in twain, and, laving the shores of Memphis, reach the sea again, to take another annual circuit to the end of time.

We take our departure hence to-morrow. A new and fruitful field is now before me; and however often it may have been reaped by others who have preceded me, there is, doubtless, an abundance of rich gleanings which I may be able to gather into my garner. Whatever portion I may hereafter send to you, may you, after winnowing away the chaff, find a few golden grains of the corn of the Egyptian valley. Until then, Adieu.

LETTER IX.

Cairo.—The Secret of "cheap Travelling" in the East.—Arrangements frustrated.—A Hint for Travellers.—Mohammed Ali and the Canal of Alexandria.—Loading a Camel.—A noisy Scene.—The Nile.—Its Associations.—Voyage up the Nile.—Arab Devotion.—A Character.—A Pacha's Project.—Delicate Negotiations.—The Frank Quarter.

Grand Cairo, ——.

Well, we have arrived here at last, after six long days dragging up stream at the rate of thirteen miles per day, the distance from Adfe being only eighty miles. But then we have been accidentally initiated into the mystery of the "*cheap travelling*" of the *East*, so much vaunted by travellers. The whole secret of which is, that some travellers through improper advice, and many others from pecuniary motives, throw themselves into a common river-boat of the Arab fellahs, overrun with the most loathsome creatures, besides having only half a complement of hands. They suffer their valuable time to be frittered away by those indolent and lazy Arabs, rather submitting to barter that pre-

cious commodity against a few piastres or a little extra trouble, than to use those indispensable and wholesome stimulants, "*backshee*" *and bamboo;* thus requiring six days to accomplish what can be better done in three.

Before leaving Alexandria we had made arrangements for one of the regular line boats, belonging to a company of merchants there, in which, being doubly manned and ably commanded, the trip was made in the least possible time. Our friends sent on an express to *Adfe* (where the canal intersects the river), to retain for our exclusive accommodation the company's boat, about to sail the next day.

We then embarked on board the canal-boat with all our effects, and, on arriving at the river, found that our arrangement for the boat had been frustrated by some friends of other parties concerned in the line, who had been made aware of our express, and had sent another in advance of it, or, perhaps, bribed our own. We found that our boat had gone some hours, and the agent of the company had supplied our order with a little *kanjee*, which, as he said, had the recommendation of being new, and not requiring to be sunk to rid it of vermin before it was fit for use. There being a fine north wind at the time, we naturally supposed that we could run the short distance to Cairo in a day and a half; so we made a virtue of necessity, and embarked cheerfully, with an assurance from the agent that only six hands were necessary, as we should not have to *tow* the boat a mile.

We ran on a few hours in gallant style, stemming the current at the rate of five or six miles per hour. When sundown came, the wind fell; and then it is the duty of the crew to get out with their tow-line and drag the boat along the shore, taking advantage of all the eddies. No such thing, however, with us. Our captain gave the order for supper; and as after that an Arab must sleep, and there is no waking him without the whip (which part of the per-

formance we had not yet learned), we lay quietly moored alongside the bank all night; next morning there was no wind; the men dragged during the morning one mile per hour. During the afternoon a little breeze for a short time; sundown found us fast to a stake again; thus one day was gone, and only twenty miles were made. Next day we spent on the same spot, but that was not owing to any fault of the crew. A tremendous gale of wind from the desert made it dangerous to navigate the river. The next and the following days we crept along, at the rate of ten and fifteen miles in the twenty-four hours. The fact is, we were regularly cheated by these villains. The gentlemen began, as usual with them, to encourage the captain and crew, by promising them "*backshee*," and all the time giving them meat, coffee, and tobacco. This was very injudicious. They should have given them nothing, or else, to finish their breakfast, a dessert of supple bamboo should have followed, by way of quickening their digestion. The sly dogs thought, and with good reason, too, that the more days they took to reach Cairo, the more days of good cheer for them. So, for once, our weapons of liberality were turned against us; and in requital for our kindness to them, they determined to bestow upon us as much of their good company as we could possibly endure, together with that of all their domestic establishment of rats, spiders, cockroaches, and other nameless creeping creatures, as plentiful as the dust from which the good book says they sprang in days of old. Now the gentlemen were heartily laughed at on our arrival here, for either not knowing the use of the universal bamboo medicine for lazy Arabs, or, if they did, for their scruples against applying the remedy. However, we have travelled *cheap*, only paying eight and a half dollars for the boat, that is, for six days' travelling in the East, and have actually saved four dollars! that an extra set of hands would have cost us, by whose aid in pulling at night, while the other

crew rested, we could have reached this place in two days (barring the day lost by the gale). As good, however, sometimes comes out of evil, we shall profit by our late experience when fitting out our expedition for the Cataracts.

The canal of Alexandria is a noble work for this semi-barbarous country, but the manner of its construction was one of *wholesale iniquity*, and none but the most hardened and accomplished tyrant would have conceived the idea, or could have possessed the cruelty to carry on any work in such a murderous manner. It appears that ever since Mohammed Ali has turned cotton-planter and merchant, his constantly increasing crops found their only way to market through Alexandria, by way of the river to *Rosetta*, and thence round by sea to the shipping port. The frequent gales and almost constant northerly winds caused very serious delays by the river-boats being detained sometimes for weeks at the mouth of the river, and sometimes being lost at sea, and the foreign shipping which had come from France and England expressly for cotton were detained too long, and the expenses becoming onerous, the cotton had to support the difference. *Par consequence*, Mr. merchant Ali's purse felt the loss, without his knowing how to prevent it. Upon one occasion an unusually large and fine crop was ready to descend the river, and high prices in Europe had sent an extra number of vessels in search of it. The cupidity of Mohammed, and his eagerness not to lose a good market through the agency of the elements and Arab delay, induced him to cast about in search of a remedy. He was informed by some learned Turk that "there was anciently a great commercial city where Alexandria now stands, and that the infidel nest had been overturned by the faithful children of the Prophet, and its fine canal from the Nile suffered to fill up, and—" "What canal?" eagerly inquired the ruler of Egypt. The *mufti's* antiquarian lore here gave out, and the impatient planter

immediately assembled a hasty divan upon the important matter. Who it was that enlightened him as to the real facts of the case I do not know; but suffice it to say, he became satisfied in his own mind that, as a canal had once been somewhere there, he could make one also, as well as any Ptolemy of old. Such an undertaking, in any other country, would first have to be discussed in council, then surveyed, laid out, and contracted for, materials prepared and brought along the line, and the *wherewith* to be duly provided to pay folks withal, who prefer not to work *gratis*.

Now all these matters are better regulated in Egypt. The modern Pharaoh has but to will it, and any scheme, however visionary, is immediately put *en train;* and if he has not the *Children of the Captivity* to make bricks for him, the *Land of Goshen* still teems with slaves quite as degraded and oppressed as the ancient Israelites. To take up the matter systematically, and get the canal completed by degrees in one or two years, as the other occupations of his subjects would permit, or their physical force could accomplish without serious injury, did not belong either to the hasty temperament, the tyrannical habits, or the summary practice of this sanguinary military ruler.

The *cotton* was ready, and the ships were waiting for it. The market was hungry, and others might supply it too soon for him. The price was high, and it might fall before he could deliver his bags in Europe. The fiat went forth, and, *presto!* the whole population of Lower Egypt was put in requisition; the whole "*materiel*" for the use and sustenance of labour, in the shape of all the provisions and implements to be found in the Delta, was sequestered for the use of *the government*. Hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children were extended along the whole line with their *hoes and baskets*, and thus accoutred, they (by the aid of bamboo auxiliaries) went through their daily toil, and then took to the bare ground at night. No pay nor *backshee*

stimulant was promised them, and the provocative to good appetite for their sugar-cane and lentils was incessant toil, bamboo tonics for weak stomachs, and bamboo correctives for rebellious ones. Thus the forty miles of canal were begun, completed, and navigated by cotton bags in an incredibly short space of time, some say in *thirty or forty days*, at the cruel and useless sacrifice of thousands of human lives.

But no matter; the *cotton* got to market quite in time to secure a good price, and the ample returns of *specie currency* were sufficient remuneration for the loss of a few vile Arabs more or less.

When about to set out from our hotel in Alexandria, we had our first initiative in the mode of transporting travelling effects in the East. We sent to engage a platoon of porters to carry our immense *materiel* to the canal; but instead of the troop of noisy Arabs who seized upon it when we first landed at the custom-house quay, and brought up each a heavy load one mile for ten *paras* (two and a half cents), two huge camels came stalking into the courtyard. Now I had seen at Smyrna the compact bales of merchandise nicely balanced one on each side of the camel, but it puzzled my ingenuity to conceive how they would dispose, on the round backs of these two animals, such a medley of discordant articles as our travelling equipage is composed of. Round, square, or triangular, short or long, straight or crooked, slippery or rough, was the separate quality of each individual article. On a May-day morning in Gotham, no little skill is displayed by our ingenious cartmen in stacking up the indefinite sundries of a moving household; but I am much deceived if, set to load a *camel* with such incongruous traps, they would not be completely "nonplussed."

First, then, the docile animal was made to kneel down. The manner in which this movement is effected is singular, and very painful to behold at first. The beast, at a signal

given (which, if not instantly obeyed, is followed by blows), first utters a groan in anticipation of its expected burden; then stooping, it puts one fore knee upon the ground, then the other; after which, gathering its hind legs under the body, it comes down to the ground with an awkward and apparently a painful jerk. Then commences the operation of loading up. There is a sort of wooden pack-saddle, with projecting sticks on the top whereby to attach ropes. Then a large rope-net (made of the coarse fibres of the palm-tree wood) is spread over this saddle, and several feet on the ground on each side of the animal. Then on the net commences a foundation of boxes, trunks, and other heavy articles, on which is raised a superstructure of hampers, kegs, barrels, *batterie de cuisine*, arms, saddles, and other gear too tedious to mention. The sides of the net are then gathered up and made fast to the pack-saddle horns. The beast is then assisted to rise, not by a kindly shoulder, but by the brawny arm of an Arab wielding the bamboo, who repays with interest the many rough blows which he himself has received from various other quarters. When the animal is on his feet again, then comes the surplus cargo of light articles, in the shape of beds thrown across the top of the load, jugs and jars hung round the sides, the whole flanked by innumerable baskets, pails, lanterns, &c., &c. Thus loaded, two camels carried all our effects. But it is only for short distances that such heavy loads can be carried by the camel. For a regular, long caravan-journey, it would have required a dozen of these *ships of the desert* to transport conveniently and safely the same articles, with fuel and water for a few days. Alexandria lying some miles west of Rosetta, the course of the canal is about southeast to where it strikes the Nile. At either end is a great dike to regulate the height of the water. When we arrived at the farther end, we found such a press of boats loading and unloading, with hundreds of those Mogrebins from Barbary

whom I have heretofore described to you, all bound up the river, that I became alarmed; and here, for the first time since I left Paris, my heart failed me, and I would have given all I possessed in the world to turn short about and retrace my steps to the west. Of all the noisy people in the world, the Arabs exceed anything I ever heard; and to be packed away with a thousand of them, among boat-loads of grain, beans, and cotton, in the deep basin of the canal, with banks thirty feet high, and to be compelled to hear their horrid yells, and endure their loathsome and squalid presence in such close proximity, made me sick at heart. But, after all the sacrifices the gentlemen had made on my account and for my comfort, I concluded to smother my feelings and shut my eyes to the disgusting scene around me. And when we made out to get to the quay and ascend the dike, all my lugubrious apprehensions vanished at the sight of the *glorious river*. The Rhine, the Rhone, the Neva, the Borysthenes, and the "dark rolling Danube," were all in succession called up in my memory; but none of them would compare with the *Nile*, even at its present half low state. Apart from this, the *associations* of a life all crowded at once upon my mind.

One unconsciously casts a glance among the sedges on the river bank, as if another *Moses* was heard to cry from the bulrushes.

The raw-boned buffaloes lying in the stream seem *Pharaoh's lean kine*, ready to devour yon sleek and fat oxen feeding in the field. The verdant pastures of the opposite *Delta* are an earnest of the "*Land of Goshen*" beyond, and the *lotus* lying on the water calls to mind all the beautiful mythology of the earlier Egyptians, while the ox and the sheep in the meadows, the *ibis* sailing over our heads, and the *cat* stealing round the corner of the house, tell of the degradation of those *splendid mysteries*, and of the beastly and obscene rites to which they gave rise. The hieroglyphic

on that stone, now worked into the modern wall beneath our feet, speaks of Memphis or Sais, and yon fragment of granite tells us of Thebes or of Philæ. The sheaves of wheat around us conjure up the scene of *Joseph* and his brethren, and the cargoes of grain and pulse in the river speak less of *famine* than of plenty. The sound of the whip reminds us of the taskmasters of the Israelites.

Turn the eyes which way you will on the border of the *Nile*, listen to the numerous sounds which fall upon the ear, and a thousand associations start up at once, connected with one's earliest recollections of sacred and profane history, classic lore, and vulgar tradition. These being one's first impressions on reaching the "*River of Egypt*," they do not cool, but go on accumulating in number and interest every mile one proceeds up its noble stream.

Soon after leaving *Adfe* (which is only a mean village), one reaches the first Arab town upon the Nile, where we stopped to obtain a supply of fresh milk, eggs, poultry, and pigeons for our table, and a sheep for the crew. The houses appeared to be built of rough-burned bricks, obtained perhaps from some ruins on the river. It was a poor place, with not a single object to attract our attention save the singular population of *Arabs*, being the first I had seen living in a town of their own, and engaged about their own affairs beyond the sound of the whip of the taskmasters in the port of Alexandria or the canal basin of Adfe. We walked about among them, and enjoyed the novelty of the scene.

When again on our way, the time for evening prayer was announced from the minarets. Instead of our crew throwing down their towing-rope and prostrating themselves on the ground to pray, I observed that the *reis* (captain) did the business by wholesale, as proxy for the ship's company. Never did I see *Moslem*, whether Tartar, Persian, or Turk, so *physically* and mentally devout as this Arab skipper. His earnest gesticulations, prostrations, genuflexions, and

grimaces, appeared to me to be the result of a conviction that a greater amount of fervour ought to characterize his devotions, on account of his responsibility for the dingy crew, whose accounts he had undertaken to settle with their prophet while he kept them to their work on shore. Five times every day he repeated the same ceremony, and each time with equal regard to the importance of his mediatorial office.

I was amused one day, when the sand from the desert was blowing in clouds upon us so that no object could be distinguished beyond the length of the boat, to see with what ease our pious *reis* made out to discover the direction of Mecca, and invariably turned his face towards the Holy City when at prayer. This reminded me of several ludicrous scenes that had been enacted on board the steamer from Constantinople to Smyrna. Some hours after we had got under way from the former place, I saw a well-dressed, dandy-looking young Turk pulling out his watch and appearing very anxious about something. He would walk from one side of the boat to the other, stretching his neck out in every direction, endeavouring to peer through the clouds and mist, to discover some object beyond his ken, some object of interest to him. Every instant his watch was in requisition, and each time his anxiety and perturbation appeared to increase; until, finally, it rose to such a pitch that he could not retain his own counsels any longer, but, sinking his Moslem pride, he came with a desolate and subdued mien to the captain, and begged him to *point the way to Mecca*, as the hour of prayer had already begun! The captain stepped to the binnacle, and ranging with his hand across the compass, pointed in the desired direction. His astonishment at the facility with which an *infidel* out of sight of land could in an instant point direct to the place which every good Moslem when on shore is never at a loss to know, even in the darkest night, was so great, that he

looked the very personification of skepticism, and, turning round to the by-standers with a sort of inquiring look, seemed to supplicate a confirmation of what he had just seen and heard. Receiving an assuring nod from two or three others, his delight and gratitude were equal to his first astonishment. Without losing another instant of his precious time, he unrolled and spread his carpet, and immediately began one of the most scientific and profound exhibitions of Moslem forms I ever beheld; and, unconscious of the eyes which were upon him, he appeared rapt in a perfect abstraction from the busy scene around him. How often he went through all the different attitudes of standing, kneeling, prostration, uprising, and downfalling, I cannot say, for I left him busy at the work; and when, a long time after, I returned to his part of the deck, I found him in profuse perspiration from the physical exertion he had been making. Rising from his devotions, he rolled up his carpet, lighted his pipe, and sat down in an attitude of profound meditation; at every whiff rolling up his eyes towards the man at the wheel, as if to divine what magic art he used to interpret the many-pointed hieroglyphic on the little vibrating card before him. Once or twice he rose and went to the binnacle, and put his finger to the compass, as if to ascertain whether it was a living animal or the star of Mohammed, impressed into the service of the infidel. The glass cover arrested his inquiring touch. Returning disappointed to his place, he, with many a *Mash Alla* on his tongue, resumed his communion with the usual comforter, the consoling *chibouk*.

He was from beyond Adrianople, and had never before seen Stamboul or the sea, nor ever beheld a vessel before, much less the mariner's compass or a *steamboat*, and had set the latter down as the invention of some lying dervis.

Next morning, instead of going to the captain to inquire the direction of the holy *Kebla*, he spread his carpet with great precision just in the same place on the deck, facing

that part of the quarter rail which he had taken sight over in the evening. He was sure he had *Mecca* in his eye, and went at his work with the utmost satisfaction, and remained his usual time, swinging his arms, and prostrating and striking his forehead on the deck. When he rose up and began his pipe, he was asked if it was sometimes usual for pilgrims to pray towards the place of sunset, as *he* had just been so fervently doing. Figure to yourself his surprise and mortification when he was told that the boat had in the night rounded to, and was then at anchor with her head to the east instead of the west. What was to be done? The hour of prayer was past; but then he could not expect to reach *Mecca* without accident (and, by-the-way, drive so profitable bargains there at the bazars), if he omitted a single one of his five daily prostrations towards that sacred spot. So at it he went again, leaving his breakfast untasted, satisfying his conscience, and, at the same time, whetting his appetite by an extra half-hour's gymnastics. Various other similarly amusing scenes we had with him when the vessel changed her course from west to south, and then again to east.

After this tedious digression, "*revenons à nos moutons.*" Passing the site of *Sais* with a temporary breeze, which we could not afford to lose, we came next to the extreme southern point of the *Delta*, where the two remaining branches of the formerly seven-mouthed stream unite into one. Here we saw such immense hydraulic works going on with great activity, that we inquired of the *reis* what they meant. He peevishly replied that he did not know; but all the boatmen on the river, and he among the rest, were of the opinion that Mohammed Ali was about constructing a huge gate across both branches of the river, in order to stop all trade except by his own boats, as he had already monopolized every other branch of industry in the country. Not

satisfied with this elucidation of the subject, we sought and found another version of the story.

We were informed here that, in consequence of the annual inundation of the Delta for so many thousand years, which had been the original cause of its being reclaimed from the sea (passing through the various phases of marsh, swamp, meadow, and upland, to arable land), the depositions of the Nile, after filling up five of its former branches, had at last raised the surface of the soil so far above the level of ordinary inundations, that most of the time it was beyond the reach of their fertilizing influence. By which means the lord of the manor could never calculate with any certainty on the produce of cotton from this now "*best of the land of Egypt.*" In order, therefore, to create a uniform and well-established system of irrigation, he (or some one for him) had conceived the idea of making an immense *dike* or dam, with locks, across each of the branches of the river at the head of the Delta, whereby to raise the level of the river a few feet, in order to throw a great stream of water into an immense canal to be cut through the centre of the Delta, and from it to flood the land on each side, by means of lateral and parallel canals of smaller capacity. Now as I am not at all acquainted with the science either of hydraulics or hydrostatics, I am puzzled to know how he proposes to stop the course of the mighty river, curb its power, and subjugate its impetuous flood, thus converting it into an instrument for raising cotton by rule and measure. I doubt even if the hydrometric acquirements of a Newton or a Davy could solve the difficult problem, how much strength it would require to resist and withstand the ever-changing and overwhelming weight of fluid now proposed to be arrested in its course by stone and mortar, floodgates and milldams.

But, in this age of modern science and improvements, what obstacles can check the ever-accumulating power of the

disenthralled mind of man? The wonderful basin of the Egyptian Moeris, and the splendid canal of the Israelitish Joseph, although mighty demonstrations of mere physical power and patient endurance, were pigmy efforts compared to the present gigantic grasp of ambitious intellect in a barbarian chief. But if it be true, as we have since been credibly informed, that engineers were sent to make a trigonometrical survey of the cubic volume of materials in one of the great pyramids of Egypt, and to ascertain the probable expense of converting them to the use of his agricultural speculations, then I say the "*great regenerator*" of Egypt, as he is called, deserves to rank with the greatest desolators who ever disgraced the name of man, by destroying temples, columns, paintings, and sculpture, no matter whether from motives of revenge, religious bigotry, or cupidity. He would deserve any name, from that of the arch-destroyer Cambyses to that of the Gothic Alaric, or Attila the Hun.

Let the barbarian but touch a stone of the Pyramids (those monuments which belong to the world at large), and if the sword of the *Gaul* or the bayonet of the *Briton* cannot reach him, I hope the cannon of the young *West* will thunder such anathemas in his ears as never echoed through the valley of the Nile, or made his mountains of Arabia tremble to their base.

But it is whispered here among the knowing satellites of the great Eastern luminary, that these pyramids, dry docks, and millponds are but syllabubs and sugarplums wherewith to amuse him who keeps the gates of the Euxine. Mohammed Ali, under pretext of wanting *piles* for his dams, and *wood* for his floodgates, smuggles *timber* for his navy under the very eyes of the Porte; thus hoodwinking the grand seignor and putting a beam in his eye, Ali profits by his ruse.

Another example of his vaunted cunning and Machiavelian policy is, that while he tickles the Frenchmen by a sudden

taste for the fine arts, and virtuoso zeal for a *National Museum*, he amuses Johnny Bull with his great desire for *public improvement*.

Iron for *shot* may as well come in the shape of *railroad bars*, as the coals for smelting them in the name of *fuel for steamers*.

Cajoling his own subjects and partisans by not naming his successor, but leaving each *clique* in his cabinet to boast the fortunes of its separate favourite, first Ibrahim, and then some other rises in the scale of his pretended favour; anon he looks on another, and at last finishes by selecting none, yet giving hopes to all. But when the victorious conqueror of Syria and threatener of Stamboul shall find it his interest, and the appointed time for action is at hand, then he will come to the rescue of his own fortunes at home, and, in the significant phrase of the day, it will be "Turk eat Turk."

Our arrival at Grand Cairo was as amusing as it was troublesome. About four miles below the shipping port of Cairo we came to a reach in the river, where the wind blew so strong ahead that it was impossible to get another inch up stream: so we came to alongside the bank, and prepared to disembark our effects; but a tide-waiter stopped us, saying we must have a permit to land anything coming from Alexandria, and the custom-house was four miles off. We, however, set our dragoman Giovanni to bribe the fellow to let us load up the luggage, and send it with him to the *dogana*. They both lighted their pipes, and sat down on the river-bank in a good shady place, ordered coffee, and went to work *en regle* to negotiate the preliminaries of the important matter. Knowing, however, what would be the result of their deliberations after a decent length of time and at least three pipes had been bestowed upon them, we sent immediately for a brace of camels for the cargo, horses for ourselves, and donkeys *ad libitum* for our various followers. A respectable number of pipes now being

disposed of, Signor Giovanni and the protector of the pacha's revenues rose from their divan and assisted in making up our caravan.

We accompanied the effects towards the port, skirting the river-bank, and riding through the finest avenue of trees that I have seen since I left Europe. After considerable ceremony and several attempts to go to piping it over the business, Giovanni tickled their itching palms with quantum sufficit of plated piastres, in order to hasten their deliberations. All things passed muster except sundry boxes of wine and hampers of porter, drums of figs and raisins, and other stores, on which the farmer of the customs claimed an enormous duty. We made a note of the delinquent articles, left Giovanni to look after them, and then took up our line of march for the capital, distant one and a half miles from *Boulac*, its shipping port. Admiring the beauty of the scene, the domes and Saracenic minarets of the mosques, &c., &c., we forgot that we had left our interpreter behind until we had arrived at the gates of Cairo. Now we knew where we wanted to go; but how to construe into Arabic, without the aid of our automaton lexicon, the words "Mrs. Hill's boarding-house in the Frank Quarter," we were in somewhat of a quandary, and had as much as we could do to keep the camels, horses, donkeys, &c., from straying among the crowd that was pouring out of the vomitory near which we stood, while waiting the return of the express sent after that august personage, an Eastern dragoman, in this case our own *Don Giovanni*.

However, we espied walking leisurely through the gate the first Frank we had seen near Cairo, in the shape of a very genteel, remarkably well-dressed Frenchman or Italian, as we thought. One of the gentlemen addressed him in French, and he replied in the same tongue, that he knew well where we desired to alight, and politely offered to accompany us. Very soon we came to a better understanding

as to who we all were. He asked us, in good king's English, if we were not the American party expected for some time at Cairo. We replied that we were Americans, and desired to know if he might be a countryman. He replied that Americans and English were all countrymen at this distance from home, leaving us to infer to what nation he belonged. We afterward found that we were indebted for so much politeness to Dr. Walne of London, now residing here, to study the monuments and inscriptions of the country.

We first rode through a great square, next squeezed through a narrow and crowded street, then plunged under an archway into an alley so narrow as to admit only one horse at a time. Again crossing another apology for a street, we rode directly into a house, where we groped about for ten minutes, threading dark passages, without being able to see each other, under the vaulted basements of a square of houses, and guided by the voice of the donkey boys, who piloted us through these nether regions. We emerged again into open day, and passing a huge wooden gate, we found ourselves in the Frank Quarter, and were set down opposite a low-arched doorway, into which we were desired to walk. As we had to spend some time at Cairo, my heart failed me when I saw we were to be ushered into a stable for our abode.

Frequently, "ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute;" so in this instance, after clearing the barrier of low-arched passages and double gates, we came to a spacious court, surrounded by a fine four-story house, with beautiful and singular arabesque carvings in stone and wood. Here we found the best apartments—those that had been used for the hareem of the former possessor—allotted to our use.

Mr. George Gliddon, our consul here, called on us next morning, and a single line from him to the director of the customs had the effect to release, without toll or duty, our sequestered stores. We are now pleasantly installed here

with the kind Mrs. Hill, who exerts herself to make us as comfortable as good English housekeeping can.

I find that I have now again given you a long story about a short journey; *ergo*, "Much ado about nothing." May my next letter produce something more likely to amuse you than the present. In the mean time, rest assured of my ever-increasing esteem and friendship. Once more adieu!

LETTER X.

First View of the Pyramids.—A Turkish Official.—The Slave Market.—The Citadel.—Visit to the Governor.—The Mint.—Joseph's Well.—Remains of Saladin's Palace.—View from the Terrace.—The Pacha's Lions.—The last of the Mamelukes.—A Bachelor's Hall.—The highest Place in the Synagogue.—How to make Coffee.—Saracenic Ceilings.

Grand Cairo, ——.

It is so many days since my last letter was sent off, that I do not now recollect what it contained; but I do remember that such was the confusion attendant upon our entry into the city of the califs, that I had neither time to observe nor disposition to consult my first impressions. As they were principally of a disagreeable nature, however, you may congratulate yourself that I have it not in my power to inflict them on you.

The next morning, after a most delightful night of sweet repose on a good and clean English hair mattress (a luxury unknown to me this side of Moscow), I was awakened by such an extraordinary glare of light, that I at first fancied myself in the open air, on some terrace or portico. Taking a rapid survey of the premises, I found that there was scarcely any *wall* around the apartment. Casting an inquiring look upward, I saw that there was indeed a roof of some sort over my head, but so far off that I could not discover of what it was composed. That and the floor gave me the assurance that I was really within doors. All the

rest was *window, window.* Never having before seen in any country such a vast disproportion of wall and window, I was curious to know the number of panes of glass that a chamber of twenty feet square could possibly contain. So I began regularly to count one side up and down, and then from right to left, and a little reference to my multiplication table gave the enormous product of four hundred and seventy-five. Being in the highest story of the house (always considered the best and pleasantest in Oriental houses), my apartment overlooked all the houses around; but then the wainscot was so high that I could not see over it. Impatient to get a sight of something in the vicinity of my abode that might give me an idea of its *locale*, I hastily threw on a *robe-de-chambre* and slippers, and ascended the little staircase leading to the terrace. The sun had just risen. Turning suddenly round, I was astonished and surprised to see the three great Pyramids, appearing so near to me that I thought one might walk to their base, ascend to the top, and return to breakfast. This apparent proximity is caused first by their vast height, and secondly by the extreme transparency of the medium through which they are viewed. It was to me a glorious sight, and as gratifying as it was unexpected. I had not seen them on our approach towards Cairo, owing to the hazy state of the weather; but now a change of wind had brought us a fine sky and a clear prospect.

At the early hour at which I first saw the Pyramids, the western horizon had yet its deep blue tinge of departing night; and the light, cream-coloured stone of those gigantic masses being lighted up by the rising sun, they stood in extraordinarily bold relief against the western sky. As they were the first objects of great interest which greeted me here, so was I desirous of a more intimate acquaintance with them, and at as early a day as practicable. My desires have since been gratified to my heart's content, and

I will endeavour to give you some account of my visit to the Pyramids in a future letter. Before we could sally out *comme il faut*, however, certain preliminary arrangements were necessary to be made.

Our new and obliging friend, Mr. Gliddon (son of our worthy consul at Alexandria), called on us after breakfast, and brought with him his chief janizary, Hadjee Mustafa, who was to enact the three indispensable characters of protector, cicerone, and spendidor; and if one might judge from his length and breadth of body, knowing phiz, and bravado air, he could well sustain these various occupations.

This high functionary and portly personage was arrayed in true janizary costume and its appropriate equipments. The usual wide Turkish trousers, a cloth vest, with sleeves embroidered with gold, and buttoned up to the chin; then over the same an open jacket, without sleeves, also embroidered very richly. These last two portions of dress always appear to me as if the wearer had made a mistake, and got the vest over the coat.

Our brave defender had a shawl twisted around his waist, in which he had a brace of silver-mounted Turkish pistols; then, with a sweeping cimeter by his side, and the four feet staff of office in his hand, the whole man was topped off by a scarlet *fez* and long blue silk tassel: and strutted about with the air of a pacha of three tails, reminding me irresistibly of the personage described in the song, as a

> "Turban'd Turk who had seen the world,
> And stalk'd about with his whiskers curl'd."

The first thing to be done was for Mustafa to engage a certain number of sprightly donkeys by the week, with such a set of donkey-boys as would agree to make themselves clean and tidy, and keep so.

Then, after counting out to his highness a given number of piastres to pay out-door expenses, or for such matters as we might have occasion to purchase during our rides,

together with *backshee* to be distributed at all times, of all which the *spendidor* keeps a correct account, taking special care not to forget his own commission, we set out upon our first voyage of discovery through the town, old Mustafa leading the van, and we all in Indian file behind him. When we got into a thronged street, this worthy of ours, in order to clear the way, never compromised his dignity so much as to speak to the *canaille,* but with his silver-headed bamboo staff of office and insignia of authority, he laid about him on the shoulders, heads, and faces of all who happened to be in the way. Our whole passage through every crowded street was opened by these blows, none of them of the most gentle kind, for I sometimes thought they would have cracked some of the shorn crowns of the poor camel drivers and water-carriers. All our remonstrances were of no avail with him. He would, in spite of us, proceed *en regle,* and perform his official duties *secundum artem:* failing in this, he would be looked upon as no true janizary, and hooted at for his want of genuine spirit by every donkey-boy in Cairo.

It is impossible, by writing, to convey to any person who has never seen an Eastern city a correct idea of the manner in which their houses are built or the streets arranged. Cairo is more peculiar in this respect than any city of the East I have yet seen, and is said to resemble in some measure the cities of the Great East, particularly that of its founders, Bagdad. At some future time, when I become better acquainted with the intricate topography of this place, I may attempt to initiate you into the mysteries of its labyrinths.

Our ride the first day took us through the bazars, but after those of Constantinople they are not worth speaking of: even the drug market, although so much nearer the source of all the gums and spices of Arabia Felix, is less interesting than that of the capital of Turkey.

We next rode to the *slave market.* It is held in a large khan, built of stone round a square, in the centre of which we saw many groups of wild Africans from the region of the Niger, brought by caravans across the deserts to Darfur, and thence through Abyssinia and Nubia, by the Nile, to Egypt. In this market purchases are made at wholesale prices by dealers from Smyrna and Stamboul. The retail prices range from forty to one hundred dollars for the different ages and qualities.

I have never yet seen such a hideous misrepresentation of the human form divine, as these children of Ham presented.

The various degrees of form and feature, from the passably comely to the horridly ugly and disgusting, almost induced me to believe the theory which holds that there is a *connected* chain of animals, from the little caricature monkey of Brazil to the fierce orangoutang of the Cape, and then on through all the different phases of *human* nature, from the most deformed races of Guinea and Senegal, to the beautiful and godlike sons of Japhet, in Georgia and the Caucasus.

They all sat upon the ground, busily assisting each other at the *toilet,* which occupation was merely that of anointing their curly wool with rancid oil, then plaiting and twisting it in various devices, and arranging it around the head and face.

Their faces and bodies being also well greased, they shone like so many black-snakes basking in the sun. They manifested no signs of discontent, but all *seemed* happy, laughing and singing their national airs. All this may have been *forced,* from the fear of raw-hide whips in the hands of their keepers, which panacea for sulkiness, by-the-way, is also an article of commercial speculation in the bazar. It is made from the thick hide of the hippopotamus, and some of these whips are one inch in diameter at the largest end, ta-

pering off to a very slender point, and extremely tough and flexible. The gentlemen purchased two or three bundles of them for the American market—for *riding-whips*, however.

Around this court are close rooms, in which are kept slaves of a higher race, natives of the more eastern parts of the African continent. They were much less offensive objects than the others; indeed, some of the females were quite pretty, and extremely well formed. These were all well dressed, and intended for the hareem. They command high prices, according to their youth, beauty, and accomplishments in dancing, singing, &c. White slaves are kept at the houses of the dealers.

In order to get a bird's-eye view of the city, its dependancies and environs, we rode up to the *citadel*, which is situated on the summit of a hill, the last spur of those mountains of Western Arabia which lie between the Nile and Red Sea, quite up into Abyssinia.

It was not without some difficulty that our little donkeys scrambled up the steep ascent, which is cut out of the solid rock.

The apex of this hill has no doubt been cut away in former times, in order to obtain a sufficient level area for a fortress, which might contain the palace of the sovereign and its appurtenances. It is surrounded by a parapet wall, and now contains the palace of the pacha, and one for his hareem, the halls of justice, the mint, and Joseph's Well.

The first two were closed for the present, on account of some rumours of the plague. The governor of Cairo, *Habbib Effendi*, on learning that a party of foreigners, accompanied by the American consul, was in the citadel, sent an invitation for us to pay him a visit, which we, of course, accepted.

We found him in the audience chamber of the halls of justice. After the ceremony of introduction, pipes and coffee were, as usual, introduced. A conversation of half an hour then took place. The old gentleman was exceedingly po-

lite and courteous in his manner; asked many questions relative to America; and inquired by what route we came to Egypt. We replied that we had not come directly from home; and before we had enumerated one half of the countries we had visited, the old Turk's geographical attainments were run out. He could not keep on the track; but it was enough for him to learn that we had been about as far north as land would permit, and had crossed the Russian empire, and been to Stamboul; and, above all, had seen *Nicholas* and the sultan. After a few mutual compliments, we left the governor to finish our inspection of the citadel, while he returned to the business of the crowded court-room, which our visit had interrupted. I would have followed him to the place of justice, in order to see the curious and summary process of a Turkish trial; but I had been previously informed that most of the cases in the court were criminal ones, and punishment following the moment after sentence, I did not care to look upon the severe infliction of the "*bastinado*," as it is performed in that place.

With an order from the governor we visited the *Mint*, and found it a much inferior establishment to that of Constantinople.

Our attention was next directed to the celebrated *Joseph's Well*. This extraordinary excavation was made by *Saladin*, in the twelfth century, in order to supply the citadel with water in case of siege. Although not so deep as the great well of Koeningstein in Saxony, it is far more curious in its construction. Do not marvel when I tell you that nothing is more easy than to descend this well on *horseback* to the depth of 150 feet, and, had there been a horse at hand, I should have done it.

The well is square, and about twenty feet in diameter. On each of the four sides there is a wide gallery cut in the rock, with an inclined plane winding down to a platform, which is 150 feet from the top, and about 100 feet from the

bottom of the well. On this platform of rock is a machine for elevating the water, by means of earthen jars attached to a strap, like the elevators in our flour-mills. This machine is constantly kept in motion by oxen, which are kept down there for the purpose. Another similar machine at the top draws the water to the surface of the rock, whence it is led to the gardens of the citadel. It is brackish, from the saltpetre in the soil through which it filters from the river, and is not fit for drinking except in time of necessity. The gallery by which we descended has openings cut through into the shaft of the well to admit light and air.

From this mighty work of the great Saladin we went to the spot where his splendid palace once stood, which, after being used as a magazine, was destroyed not long since by an accidental explosion. All we found remaining of this once proud Saracen temple were its massy columns, taken from the ruins of Memphis, and now lying in the same confusion as when they were taken from the ancient capital of the Pharaohs.

From this elevated terrace we had a magnificent view. Beneath our feet lay the whole city, sufficiently distant to prevent its disagreeable details from offending the eye. The domes and minarets of all the mosques were seen at one glance. Beyond the city, towards the west, were the river and the green valley, bounded by the hills of the Libyan desert, on the edge of which rise the mighty Pyramids. To the north was the Land of Goshen, and the solitary obelisk of Heliopolis is all that now remains of *On*, that once proud city of priests, where Moses became "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Towards the south the eye passes over the site of Memphis, without any object, save a few mounds, to arrest its attention, and follows the course of the mighty river as it flows through the midst of the rich valley of Egypt. To the east lies the road taken by the Children of Israel at the time of the Exode.

There is, perhaps, no spot on the globe that presents a panorama so crowded with objects of the most intense and exciting interest as this, and where so many extraordinary associations crowd upon the mind. Rapt in profound admiration of the glorious scenery of this great theatre of events, so important in the annals of our race, it required but little effort of imagination to restore the temples and palaces of Memphis, and the collegiate cloisters of *On*. The chief actors in the wonderful drama that has been enacted on this stage rose severally to my view, from the earliest Pharaoh to the last Ptolemy; from the Mameluke sovereigns to the viceroy of the conquering Turcoman.

Æthiopian, Philistine, and Persian, Greek, Arab, and Turk, have alternately devastated these beautiful plains, and overturned its cities and temples.

"*The daughter of Egypt shall be confounded; she shall be delivered into the hand of the people of the north.*" "*Pharaoh, king of Egypt, is but a noise; he hath passed the time appointed.*" "*Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant.*" "*Why are thy valiant men swept away? They stood not because the Lord did drive them.*"

There is no spot on earth where more miracles were performed, and where more prophecies have been accomplished, than that which can be seen at one glance from the Arabian heights above Cairo.

On leaving the citadel our janizary, old Mustafa, desired us to step in and see the lions of the pacha. We did walk in; but judge of my surprise when I tell you that I found myself literally in the *lion's den*. There were no *cages* or *chains* to confine the lords of the forest, but these grim monsters were stalking about the room. One old patriarch cast a glance at me and gave a growl, but at a word from his keeper he crouched into a corner. I assure you I did not stop long in such company; but, hastening out, I rallied old Mustafa well for the fright he had caused me.

He looked at me with surprise, and said, "Everybody go see lion, why for Frank lady no go too?" Descending from the heights, we passed through the narrow defile where the Mamelukes were cut off and slain by the present pacha. Every schoolgirl is familiar with the details of that horrid butchery; I need not, therefore, repeat them to you. The only survivor of that bloody day now walks the streets of Cairo unmolested. He is a very venerable-looking old man, with a long beard as white as snow.

We were invited to spend an evening at the bachelor's hall of our very polite and agreeable young consul. We accordingly sallied out after dinner with our paper lanterns, and, groping our way through dark alleys, came at last to almost as forbidding a little stone arched doorway as that of our own stable-faced hotel. A nearer inspection, however, showed the stone imposts and architrave to have once been very elaborately sculptured in beautiful arabesques of the best days of the califate, indicating that the mansion we were about to enter had probably belonged to some Arab of note, or, at least, to some rich merchant of Venice or Genoa. No knocker or bell announced our arrival, for our attentive cicerone had previously put the porter on the *qui vive*. He sat upon the little stone divan, which is the seat by day and bed by night of all this race of vigilant house-guards in Egypt.

A second door brought us into a court similar to that of our hotel, except that one side opened on a garden. On the side towards the street (alley) is the dwelling, opposite to the garden. One wing is for the bureau and magazine (for our consul is not an idle man, but carries on an extensive commercial agency); in the opposite wing are stables for his Arabians.

A winding staircase brought us to the state apartments of this singular mansion; our names being passed up from one well-dressed brown Arab to another, until we were ushered

into the great receiving room, where our host was reclining *à la Turc*.

You, of course, have often read of the "highest seat" in Oriental houses, yet perhaps you quite as little understand the true meaning of the term as I did before visiting the East.

In all the state apartments of the better sort of houses, that part of the room near the door (generally about twenty feet square) is paved with marble, in mosaic work, with a marble fountain in the centre, always active. This part of the room is for the servants in waiting. One or two steps take you to a platform, of the same size as the first compartment. On the two sides of this are the usual low and wide Oriental divans. This part of the room is the permanent place for guests of inferior grades. Beyond, three or four more steps lead to the place of honour for visiters of distinction. On two sides of this place are also divans of the usual dimensions, but more richly covered than those below.

At the farther side of this place of honour is a small platform, raised generally two or more steps above the last floor, and on this is another divan. This is the "highest seat in the synagogue," the supreme place of honour, where the master of the mansion reposes in state, and all those whom he deigns to honour he places on his right and left.

This is the *general* arrangement of the best houses, but they frequently differ in unessential details.

At the sides of this highest part are large bow windows, with cushions on the sill. It was from one of those projecting bow windows, mentioned in Acts xx., verse 9, that the young man who had fallen asleep was precipitated while St. Paul was preaching.

The consul placed us on the highest seat, and shortly after several other visiters came in. Pipes, coffee, and sherbet were introduced, of course. Coffee is served here in the

same manner as in Turkey and everywhere in the East, in a very small china cup, beautifully painted and enamelled. The cup is not placed in a saucer as with us, but is held in the hand inside of another cup, which has a foot to it like our egg cups. It is in this little stand or holding cup that much luxury is often displayed. It is generally composed of silver, beautifully wrought in arabesques and filigree work, by the Armenians in the bazar of Stamboul. They are frequently of gold, and often are studded with precious stones of the rarest kind and of great value. It is one of those things like Cashmere shawls and amber mouthpieces for pipes, and enters with them into the regular catalogue of standing presents. Coffee, in the East, is *seldom* taken with sugar, and *never* with milk or cream. The berry is roasted as with us, and then pounded in a mortar. The manner of preparing the beverage from it varies from our method.

A vessel of liquid coffee is always kept simmering by the fire. The moment that guests are announced at the gate, the servant, whose particular province it is to prepare the coffee, is informed of the number of visiters, to which number he adds the master or mistress of the house, and all those who may be in presence at the time. He then selects a tin boiler from his set (every set containing from two to ten cup sizes and upward), of the size wanted for the occasion, into which he puts its proper proportion of pounded coffee, then fills it up (not with water, but) with the liquid, which is always ready and nearly at the boiling point. A moment over the fire is sufficient to prepare the national beverage for use. It is then put into the small cups, and presented by an upper servant to each guest. These cup-bearers perform their offices in a very graceful and respectful manner. If the guest is one of some distinction, the presentation is accompanied by a profound *salaam*. I neglected to say that the coffee is poured into the cup *grounds*

and all, and the whole contents of the cup are generally taken together. I assure you that I have become extravagantly fond of the true *Mocha* prepared in this way. This method of preparing coffee, without carrying it beyond the boiling point for a moment, preserves all the *aroma*, which, being of a very volatile nature, is always evaporated by our double-refining process. It now makes me laugh when I think of the *clarifying* ordeal to which the good *fraus* of Gotham subject the fine ground powder of Arabia's greatest blessing. The *chiboukjee* always vies with the *kafféjee* in his attentions to the guests. Pipes and coffee are inseparable, either in the hareem or the men's apartments.

As we were desirous of seeing every part of this curious mansion, Mr. G. suggested that daylight would, perhaps, suit us better; so we left the farther inspection until next day, when we found that the ceilings and doors were composed of a very extraordinary kind of *pannel*-work in wood. I never saw a greater play of *angles* in the kaleidoscope than the Saracenic joiner had displayed here. The pannels were from two to six inches in their greatest diameters, generally sunk about one inch, with a small moulding, neatly mitred, and painted in various gay colours.

During the evening Doctor W. came in. I found him a very agreeable, intelligent, and highly educated young man, with exceedingly urbane and polished manners. His present study is hieroglyphics, and he is, I believe, of the Champoillon school.

The doctor is, I find, a great archæologist, and deeply read in the monumental lore of Egypt. He has given us much valuable information, some of it quite new to us, by which we shall profit during our intended visit to the upper country.

There is one subject on which I disagree with the learned doctor, and that is the *origin* of the *Masonic Arch;* he maintaining its *pre-Augustan* existence. The whole weight

of authority which gentlemen of his school can produce, is contained in a few paintings on some old tomb in Upper Egypt, and a certain tomb at Saccarah, hollowed out of the solid rock, and covered inside with a lining of cut stone about four inches thick, laid up the sides and over head, and bound together at the top with something like a keystone. Now I admit the latter to be a tolerable sort of arch, and, perhaps, a masonic arch too. But who can say that the tomb was not finished in this manner for a dwelling perhaps, in the *Roman* times? It is said also that the tomb itself bears an inscription dating six hundred years before our era. Putting all these very uncertain facts together, the gentleman would perhaps make grandfather Noah the first royal-arch mason.

Now as I did not come to Egypt to study hieroglyphics, date her temples, or to seek for arches, I took as little interest in this discussion as you will in what I have now related to you.

The pacha has signified his intention of founding a National Museum at Cairo, and there is no person here who stands so fair a chance of getting the first directorship of it as Doctor W., and, I think, very deservedly so.

I have also seen here a Mr. *Botta*, son of the historian. This young gentleman, I understand, has made himself conversant with the Arabic language, for the purpose of travelling into the interior of Africa and Arabia Felix, countries very imperfectly known as yet.

When I looked upon him, I thought of the tomb of our own enterprising young *Ledyard*, who lies buried in the desert.

During the evening, hearing Mr. G. call various servants by the *same* name, I was curious enough to inquire if names were so scarce in Egypt that he could not afford a different one for each of his servitors. He said that no two of them were called alike. I replied that all I had heard the whole

evening was Mustafa, Mustafa. (By-the-by, the most frequent names in the east are Mustafa and Ali.) True, said the consul, but as I had the good fortune to find three such good servants, with no other fault than one name between them all, I undertook, without changing it, to make each one know when *he* was called merely by putting the accent on the different syllable. So one I call Mûstafa, another Mustáfa, and the other Mustafà. The first is chief janizary, the second is chiboukjee (pipe-bearer), the third sais (running footman).

I have several times been delighted by hearing Mr. G. speak *Arabic*, although I am totally ignorant of that language. I have been informed that he is one of the best Arabic scholars among the Franks here.

Now I had thought the Arabic, as spoken, a very barbarous tongue; for I had only heard the Egyptian Fellahs rolling out their streams of *gutturals*, with rarely a *labial* or *dental* to break the disagreeable monotony. It was worse than the consonant-sounding, vowel-murdering jargon of the Muscovite boors.

But when the consul opens his mouth, especially in giving some of his authoritative orders, then it is that the Arabic seems to me to *mean* something, and is as full and round-toned as the Turkish, and far more euphonious. * * *

In place of the delightful bananas with which we were so plentifully supplied in quarantine at Alexandria, we have the most delightful *oranges* I ever tasted, and in the greatest profusion. Every morning our landlord brings in large branches loaded with delicious fruit, with which I adorn our parlour by sticking them up in every chink in the wall, thus gratifying two senses at the same time.

I am warned by my watch that the day is fast approaching; therefore, before the morning light breaks upon me, I will bid you once more

Good-night.

LETTER XI.

Visit to the Pyramids.—System of Irrigation.—Joseph's Canal.—Bedouins of the Desert.—Pyramid of Cheops.—Its Exterior.—Dilapidation of the Pyramids.—Ascent of the Pyramids.—The Descent.

Grand Cairo, ——.

THE present will reach you simultaneously with my last; and I will now endeavour to fulfil my promise to you respecting our jaunt to the Pyramids and the site of Memphis.

Mr. Gliddon very politely offered to be our *cicerone*, for which we feel much indebted; and, besides the pleasure of his agreeable company, there were other benefits accruing to us, from his store of valuable information touching the localities we visited. As we expect to have considerable caravan travelling before we get out of the East, Mr. G.'s experience came quite *apropos;* and he cheerfully endeavoured to impart to us all the knowledge he possesses in these matters, for our future benefit.

As no caravan can ever get under way from a large city much before noon (there being so many last things to be done), our movement did not commence until near eleven o'clock, when we took up our line of march directly for the river, which we crossed at the usual ferry.

With the Pyramids always in sight, it would require objects of more than ordinary interest, and of more consequence than anything I saw upon the road, to divert one's attention from them.

A trifling incident, however, occurred, which brought to my notice an interesting monument, that otherwise might have escaped me.

Some time previous to our leaving the line of cultivated ground, we came to a long, narrow body of stagnant water, which had remained there since the last inundation of the

Nile. We were informed that the same gully continues towards the south for an immense distance, and is supposed by some to occupy the identical site of a canal made by Joseph during his supreme rule in Egypt; and if there can be any safe deduction made from existing analogies, there is but little doubt that these are the remains of some of the hydraulic works which the great and wise Israelite caused to be constructed during those years of famine, when the whole population were employed by the government and fed from its granaries.

We see at this present day a large section of Egypt between this place and the coast, which, by the gradual accumulation of the superior strata of soil, has become so far elevated above the ordinary level of the annual inundations as to be frequently debarred from all its fertilizing influences; and there being no rain in the country, these districts would, of course, experience all the horrors of starvation if the other provinces did not come to their relief. This same process of accumulation must, from the very beginning, have exerted the same influence in all parts of Egypt at the same time. At this moment, when one stands on the immediate bank of the Nile, a very perceptible declination of the level of the country towards the desert exists, showing the great amount of accumulation nearest the river; thus, as it were, confining the stream between high banks, which in a scanty season for water cannot be overflowed in many places. We therefore see the present race of Egyptians everywhere cutting canals through this natural dike, in order to permit the stream of life to flow uninterruptedly into the lower levels. One cannot be mistaken in the superior height of the immediate banks when one sees the water which is drawn from the river by the machines of the natives, flowing with a rapid current for miles away, at right angles from the parent stream, to irrigate the parched fields of the interior farms.

Why, therefore, in Joseph's time, was there not the same necessity for assisting the overflow of the lands distant from the river?

This canal of Joseph's, however, ran parallel with the river; and a number of transverse dams, running from the confines of the desert towards the high bank, formed a succession of ponds up and down the whole country, so that water taken from the river some hundreds of miles above, might be retained in the first hollow formed partly by nature and partly by the dam, for a sufficient length of time to saturate the soil, and then let into the next, and so onward, as the whole valley has a gentle inclination towards the north. Thus, by a system of canals, dams, sluices, &c., the whole face of the country could be kept submerged for any length of time; and the upper provinces being towards the south, those higher levels being the first drained, feel the first effects of the vivifying rays of the sun.

Such dams still exist, and we have for miles ridden on the top of one of them, from the river to the desert; and on the upper or south side a portion of the last inundation lay stagnating in the sun, with myriads of frogs sporting in it. I am told, also, that the dreadful *cobra di capella* frequents those muddy pools. When once an old and entirely cultivated country has perfected and established all such works of art as the climate, soil, and other natural incidents require, there is no necessity afterward of resorting to any new and untried schemes, which, during the interval of experiments, may induce a state of things producing disorder in established usages, if not great distress and starvation.

Therefore it is that we see in old agricultural countries at the present day such a tenacity for ancient practices in husbandry.

If at Constantinople we see the great "bents" or dams of the Byzantines, and the more recent elegant marble structures of the same nature built by Justinian, now as

perfect as on the day when they were first erected, with the conduits that conveyed the water thus accumulated for the use of the city and gardens; if in Holland we still see the original dikes of the first fishermen, who regained from the sea a few fields whereon to pasture their scanty herds and flocks, and those same protections of the husbandry of the present day kept up intact by each succeeding generation, why may we not be permitted to look upon these dams and this canal in Egypt as occupying the same well-chosen and naturally indispensable sites as the works of Pharaoh's great prime minister? The Arabs still call it "Bhar Youssouf," Joseph's River.

There is little doubt, also, that this canal served in former times to dispense the treasured blessings of the Lake Moeris, when the river failed to yield a sufficient supply.

When we arrived at the borders of the canal, there was no boat, and the bottom being too soft to ford on the backs of our animals, we were obliged to be carried over by men. I had seen the half naked, ragged, and filthy Fellahs of the Nile until I had become quite reconciled to their disgusting appearance; I had also seen at Alexandria, quite near enough too, the savage Moggrebins from Barbary; but I never yet had seen the desert Bedouins. In a moment we were surrounded by a whole tribe of them; they beset us with all sorts of noises and gesticulations, and my terrors so overcame me that I could not at first realize their errand. They were quarrelling with each other for the privilege of carrying us over the water, and thus putting us under contribution for backshee. These children of nature, these inartificial and unsophisticated wanderers of the wilds of Libya, bore more resemblance to the satyrs of fable than to the human form divine; having their whole nether man, from the middle down to the feet, encased in dried black mud, gained by plunging and scrambling across the deepest parts of the slough, in their haste to reach us. The

bodies of these creatures looked like skeletons, with brown leather drawn tight over them. Their heads were frightful, and their eyes terrific. It was not until I was assured of their perfect harmlessness that I could resign myself to the grasp of a pair of the sturdiest of them. Two of them clasped each one hand together, which formed a seat, while the other two hands formed a support for the back. Thus our whole party were ferried over. When my turn came, there was no use in flinching if I wished to arrive at the Pyramids; so down I sat on this beautiful chair; but then to put, as all others did, an arm round either neck of these dingy Charons, went too much against the grain with me; so I bade them go forward, sitting up as straight as I could, to avoid too near a contact. When in the middle of the mud-hole, their faltering steps and oscillating motion well-nigh threw me off my tottering seat. However, I soon found myself coming triumphantly from the river, with this beautiful yoke of Pharaoh's lean kine.

When about to ascend the great Pyramid of Cheops, we were very glad to avail ourselves of the services of another tribe of Bedouins, who reside in a village near at hand. I had four of them assigned to me as conductors, with a promise of a good backshee in case they took me safely to the top, and returned me again where they found me. The gentlemen had each two to attend them. You, like every one else, have heard and read of the height and dimensions of these stupendous monuments, and the accounts vary so little, and are so generally correct, that you can rely on them with great confidence. Yet, notwithstanding all the measurements were previously as familiar to me as are those of St. Peter's of Rome, the effect produced upon the senses when standing beside a wall of stone *eight hundred feet long by nearly five hundred high*, unbroken by columns or friezes to lighten the heavy aspect of the mass, is, indeed, very imposing; but, before I had time to reflect on the danger of

ascending, the gentlemen hurried me onward, and I soon found myself lifted from shelf to shelf, without time to look behind me. After about half an hour's climbing, we came to a part of the edifice where it appears attempts have been made to penetrate the interior, and a large chamber, or rather notch, had been cut in one of the angles. Here a halt was called, and all gathered at this point. It is about two thirds of the way to the top, and affords quite as fine a view as that from the summit. But, when we looked down and saw the precipice below us, some of our hearts, or rather nerves, failed. My husband insisted that I should proceed no farther; and such was his anxiety on my account, that he prevailed on me to return. Early the next morning, however, he ascended to the top in a very few minutes. Not having the anxiety and responsibility of my precious self, he felt no nervousness, and enjoyed the fine prospect exceedingly. The gentlemen cut their names on the summit; but I was obliged to content myself with doing it by proxy, as did Chateaubriand, who, when at Cairo, left Egypt without going at all to the Pyramids! which, in so sentimental a traveller, seems unpardonable. He requested a gentleman (as I did) on the first opportunity to inscribe his name on them, adding, "*in order to fulfil all the little duties of a pious traveller.*"

There is a considerable degree of misapprehension, in certain particulars, among the best informed of those who have not visited these structures. I have often heard questions asked, and have done the same thing myself, which showed a very erroneous idea of their original form, and the present state of their exterior. The great mistake is in relation to the "*steps*," as they are improperly called. I always supposed that the original manner of laying up these masses of stone was first to place a broad basis, and then another layer, receding from the first, and forming a sort of step; the next layer, and each succeeding one, receding from the line of

the immediate substratum, and the whole constituting a regular flight of stairs of masonry. No doubt this was partially the case, in order to facilitate the raising of the immense blocks of stone, by degrees, to the top. But we have ocular demonstration that, when the building was finished, these steps or projections were cut down to a plane surface, and this covered with stucco, some of which still remains near the top of one pyramid. One of these immense piles had, instead of stucco, a casing, six feet thick, of hard red granite, highly polished, thousands of blocks of which now lie scattered round its base, and several layers remain in their places above the accumulated rubbish. The material of which all these structures are composed is a fine cream-coloured calcareous stone.

It is uncertain who it was that commenced the work of destruction upon these most ancient of Egypt's monuments. It may have been Cambyses; but that destroyer seemed to direct his attention mostly to the idols and sculptured abominations upon the walls of the temples, all of which were so offensive to the eyes of the Theists of Chaldea. These monuments, so simple in their form, having no sculpture whatever, and originating, no doubt, from a nation and religion foreign to Egypt (perhaps the shepherd kings), contained in their outward structure and finish nothing to offend the eye, shock the prejudice, or excite the cupidity of the Persian conquerors. Not being absolute barbarians, they scarcely destroyed anything wantonly, except under the high excitement of religious prejudice or warlike fury; and under the impulse of these, their first attention would be directed to the more elaborate works of art, and to private property. Who, then, but the deluded *Moslems* were the destroyers? The Moslems, whose cupidity had been excited by ignorance to suppose that these vast piles of masonry were erected expressly to conceal treasure. They may not have been the first to unseal the hidden entrances, for

it can hardly be supposed that the Persian conqueror would pass the Pyramids by totally unnoticed; it is more probable that he, through the assistance of some captured priests, gained possession of the secret which opened to him their interior.

When Belzoni forced his way into these Pyramids, he found inscriptions in Arabic, showing that they had been entered by a Saracen conqueror some centuries before. Nothing of great value has been discovered in them in modern times. We are told that under one of the califs an order went forth for the destruction of these edifices, and that the work was committed to the care of the most skilful engineer of the age. He wrought at it for a long time, expending much labour and treasure, and finally gave it up. Of course he had no gunpowder.

The engineer began at the top; but how he got there, up the smooth plane of five hundred feet, is beyond my comprehension, unless by cutting a flight of steps from the bottom. There he first pryed loose and cast off the apex; and then entering his lever between the interstices of the topmost layers, they, of course, came down faster than the cars down the *Montagnes Russes* at Paris, or the artificial ice-hills of St. Petersburg. If each stone had been tied to the necks of a regiment of these Vandals, I should desire to have been there to give it its first impulse, and would have felt as if I was doing a favour to posterity with each stone that I helped over.

When the area of this vertical breach became of considerable extent, the engineer appears to have given up the attack on the top, and begun upon each of the sides, working downward, to throw off the outer crust or shell of the edifice, in the hope of finding other yet unexplored entrances and chambers. His patience did not give out until, arriving at the bottom, he had flayed the whole pyramid; but his utmost efforts could do nothing more than make a

skin wound upon these colossi. One of the pyramids has a considerable portion of its outer surface, near the top, *entire*, and from thence to the ground it is in the same flayed state as the others; by which it would appear, that in that instance the work of devastation was begun from below. From these remarks, you will observe that nothing can be farther from the truth than the idea that there was a series of regular steps for ascent, in the original plan of either of these pyramids. Therefore, if the present ragged surface presents a means of ascent, you must not suppose it to be without danger. In fact, the greater part of the four sides of each is not at all practicable, and it is now only at one of the corners or angles that an ascent to the top is ever attempted.

The north side of the largest pyramid is so steep as to be dangerous of approach. A short time since, a young Englishman was precipitated from the top to the bottom, and, of course, dashed to atoms. It is not known how he fell; whether his head turned, or whether, in attempting a descent on this side, his foot slipped. Rumour has it that he threw himself off.

Near the bottom the layers of stone are four feet thick, and the mode of my ascent was as follows: First, an Arab got down on his hands and knees, thus forming a sort of extra step, while two others mounted on the ledge above, and, giving me their hands, I was enabled, by making two good long *Taglioni-isms*, to reach the place where they stood; a fourth Arab remained always behind and below me, to be ready in case I made a false step.

This went on very well for a short time, while each shelf or "step" was of sufficient width to permit the placing of my four-footed stool; but frequently the steps were not more than six inches wide! while yet they were four feet high; thus rendering the footing very insecure, and the position sufficiently alarming for weak nerves. In such cases,

another mode of procedure became necessary. An Arab would kneel on one knee, and present the other as a step; the one below holding him against the rock, that he might not topple over. At about half way from the ground the layers of stone are not over three feet thick; and from thence to the top they diminish gradually, until they are not more than half that thickness. Otherwise few could ever reach the summit, such is the fatigue necessary to raise the body so frequently four feet high, aggravated by the care and anxiety about placing the feet, so as not to be precipitated to the bottom.

Difficult as the ascent is, it is as nothing when compared with the descent. In the first operation, the face being turned to the wall, neither the giddy height is observed, nor the tapering point for which one is aiming; the whole attention being taken up with the important matter in hand, and the climber being hurried on, without time to turn around, so that a fearful height is reached before he is aware of it.

Curiosity satisfied, and its consequent excitement over, the descent becomes a regular matter of business, and the importance of the undertaking strikes one at once with its full force.

On looking down, the first few tiers of steps are quite perceptible, and their lines are distinctly marked; but all lines soon become confused, and nothing but a smooth surface is visible from fifty feet in advance down to the very ground. At first the stoutest hearts recoil at this optical delusion; but gradually gaining assurance as they descend, they get through with it tolerably well. Persons naturally nervous, and those whom any great anxiety suddenly causes to be so, find themselves in a bad predicament when called upon to perform the unavoidable task of coming down.

I have dwelt longer upon this point than may seem to you necessary; but there is such a diversity of accounts in

relation to these "steps," that I thought you would like to have the result of my experience. A celebrated traveller thus jumps at a conclusion concerning the height and ascent of the steps. He says, "the average height is about two feet and a quarter, so that the ascent is easy, and accompanied with a feeling of perfect security." The first position may be true, as to the "*average*," but the latter can apply only to a sailor or a practised cragsman, as very few persons, accustomed only to level ground and a firm foothold, I think, would agree with him.

The approach of night and the fatigue of our long day's exercise warned us that there were some other things to be done, quite as important as climbing pyramids and speculating upon their origin and dilapidation. Our party being assembled again at the base of the great pyramid, concluded to postpone their visit to the interior until the morning.

LETTER XII.

Lodgings in a Tomb.—A Night Scene.—A City of the Dead.—Visions of the Past.—Waking from the Dream.—Interior of a Pyramid.—The Colossal Sphinx.—Mummy-pits.—Pitching a Tent.—Site of Memphis.—The Military School.

Grand Cairo, ——.

* * * Our place of rest for the night was a large tomb, excavated in the solid rock, in the side of the hill, with one end opening upon a sort of terrace. Being well swept out, and spread with carpets and mattresses around the sides, it formed a tolerably comfortable parlour, with divans, &c. In the centre a table was arranged, by placing several canteen boxes side by side, which, with a clean white tablecloth and sundry articles of dinner furniture, wore quite a promising aspect.

My impatience for dinner led me to make a domiciliary

visit to the quarters of Monsieur Francois, who I found had appropriated to himself another of these chambers of the dead, which he had transformed into a pretty good *restaurant* for the living, and in which, with the aid of a little charcoal from Cairo, and sundry portions of *mummy* from a neighbouring pit, he made out to produce for us several courses of viands in his best style. This was the first time in my life that I ever *bivouacked* for a night, or made a meal seated *à la Turc* upon the ground.

A good appetite, good company, light hearts, and a consciousness of perfect security, caused our dinner and *soirée* in the tomb to pass off delightfully. The evening conversation turned unfortunately upon tombs, mummy-pits, and mummies.

My sleeping apartment, separated by a curtain from the dining-room in front, was the nook where had been the sarcophagus of some Pharaoh or other. My mattress and its occupant filled up the sacred space; nor was I at all disturbed by the wandering spirit whose three thousand years of metempsychosis can scarcely yet be over, and which might very probably have been guarding my couch in the body of the trusty dog at my feet, unconscious that my dinner had been, perhaps, cooked with its former earthly tenement.

After a day of such unusual fatigue, it is not singular that I desired to seek an early repose; and when the light of my taper disclosed to me the *locale* of my couch, its arrangements were not uncomfortable; but then, "*to sleep, perchance to dream, ay, there's the rub.*" The gentlemen spread their carpets, and, rolling themselves in their cloaks, were soon unconscious of the noisy revelry of our servants in the next-door tomb, or the unceasing jargon of the loquacious Bedouins, prowling round to catch the crumbs that fell from the tables.

As soon as the hunger of our servants was appeased and

their libations had ceased, nature asserted her rights, and not a soul of them but was as silent as their companions, the mummies; none, save myself, appeared to be awake.

Whether from motives of curiosity, or from a troubled conscience like another Lady Macbeth, I seized the burning taper, drew aside my curtain, and, stepping lightly over the sleepers, reached the terrace in front of the tomb, where the night-breeze instantly extinguished my light. My first impulse was to retreat; but, aware that my husband and his friends lay within ten feet of the door, I was reassured.

The first near object that arrested my attention was our *trusty* Mustafa, sitting on a stone, with a firelock across his arm, but fast asleep. The night was one of truly *Egyptian darkness*. Such a background, together with what I then saw, formed the very *beau ideal* of a subject for the pencil of De la Notte. In the distance, a few dying embers served to throw an uncertain light on sundry forms lying about, so like the human as easily to be mistaken for man or mummy. In the foreground were several camp-fires, around which were seated the half-naked Bedouins, silently and voraciously devouring some fragments of food.

While gazing at these hideous creatures, my imagination transformed the hooded females who flitted by the blaze into Hecates and witches, the swarthy myrmidons into devils incarnate, and the half-consumed mummy-fuel into some victim they were tormenting. Now and then a shrill ejaculation from a female, or a coarse laugh from the savage-looking beings by the fire, with their lank bodies, shaved heads, sunken eyes, and endless mouths, gave the whole a more sepulchral and demoniacal appearance than anything I had ever seen before in real life, or in the mock horrors of *Der Freischutz*. To give the last finishing touch to the picture, and to exalt my excited feelings to the highest pitch, in every direction lay fragments of mummies. Their resinous cerements were scattered in all directions; each puff of

wind drove them across the embers, where, instantly igniting, they caused a transient blaze to flash a lurid glare upon hundreds of "*death's heads and cross-bones.*" At each step of these busy demons was heard the sharp crackling of dried human skeletons; a sound which, together with my already surcharged vision, so overcame all my remaining courage, that I tottered back to my sepulchral couch, and there endeavoured to overcome my excitement, and, if possible, partake of the repose around me. Restless and uneasy, my thoughts wandering from one lugubrious object to another, I endeavoured to drown them all in ineffectual attempts to force a sleep; but all my expedients failing, I relighted my taper, and determined to while away the remainder of the night, either in reading, or in the most agreeable reflections I could conjure up. To me, who had never before passed a night out of a house, it was not a very amusing matter to be thus lying in a *cavern of the Libyan rocks*, in the very centre of the greatest Necropolis the world ever knew, where were entombed countless millions of human bodies, scarcely changed in feature, the accumulated relics of ages, and the unbroken ranks of nations and people existent more than three thousand years ago. Not only the Egyptian, but the most distinguished individuals from many nations lie here entombed; for such was the celebrity of this sacred spot, such the known skill of its adepts in the art of embalming; such the gorgeousness of the funeral habiliments; such the luxury and splendour of the obsequies, that no higher honour could be conferred, nor a more consoling promise made, than that contained in the significant words of Scripture, "MEMPHIS SHALL BURY THEE."

Endeavouring to abstract my ideas from the contemplation of this city of the dead, my thoughts would constantly recur to its stupendous monuments. Passing over the countless minor erections and excavations of the great families of the Pharaohotic age, the mind dwells with awe upon those arti-

ficial mountains of stone, cemented with the blood of a hundred thousand victims, and built for the mere purpose of hiding the body of an individual, while its soul was performing the descending and ascending series of *transmigrations*, until, its appointed *cycle* revolving, it should reclaim its former human habitation. From these monuments of human error and folly, my imagination carried me to the vast artificial caverns immediately beneath me, down whose perpendicular shafts I had been previously looking. I had been informed that many of them are computed to contain each a *million* of bodies, standing tier upon tier, until they reach within a few feet of the spot where I then lay. I inquired of myself, with such a Necropolis, what must have been the city of the living?

If the historical account be true, that Memphis had a diameter of six miles, a part of the question is answered; the borrowed monuments of Alexandria, of Constantinople, and Rome, aid us to outline the features of its great magnificence. I could fancy a sort of *Appian Way* leading from this terrace of tombs to the gates of *Memphis*, commanded by the colossal *Sphinx*, and terminated by obelisks and propylæ. Passing over the latter, I found myself in front of the palace of Pharaoh, its porticoes stretching from right to left for many a furlong, each stupendous monolith of which, rivalling the pillar of Pompey, lent its aid in support of a more gigantic platform, supporting in its turn pile on pile of colonnade, flanked at every angle with obelisks of a hundred feet, sphinxes, statues, and colossi of every form and shape, with all the suite of monsters, from the *scarabeus* to the *crocodile*.

"A long, majestic race
Of Egypt's priests the gilded niches grace,
Who measured earth, descried the starry spheres,
And traced the long records of lunar years.
High on his car Sesostris struck my view,
Whom scepter'd slaves in golden harness drew;

His hands a bow and pointed javelin hold ;
His giant limbs are arm'd in scales of gold ;
Between the statues obelisks were placed,
And the learn'd walls with hieroglyphics graced."

Lotuses, palms, and winged globes, in sculptured profusion, on the red and sparkling granite ; brazen serpents jetting pure water in cooling streams over the pavements of the courts, inducing cool currents of air through the shady corridors. On one hand, the great temple of Vulcan, with its huge Sesostris, in stone, guarding its entrance, stood facing the royal abode, backed by the palm groves of its priests and the royal pastures of the sacred ox. Stretching away to the river-bank were the granaries and storehouses of Joseph, and the treasuries of this great chief-steward of Pharaoh.

On the other hand were the splendid quarters of the great military order of Egypt, with its parade-ground and stadium. Turning towards the canals, I saw the delicious gardens of the hareem, resplendent with all the luxuriant native vegetation of Egypt, assisted by exotics from every clime, from the hanging gardens of Babylonia and the spicy groves of "farthest Ind." The pagoda of China and the kiosk of Araby peeping out from bowers of myrtle and acacia. Nymphs of every hue, from the jetty Ethiopian to the snowy damsel of Ararat, with "the psaltery and dulcimer, and all kinds of music," from the banjo of Sennaar to the harp of Israel's daughters. Entering these thrice-guarded precincts, and seating myself beside a crystal fountain, the delightful odours from burning incense of Saba overcame my senses. The contemplation of these pleasant objects induced such a quiescent state of feeling, that I gradually fell off from the semi-wakeful state of dreamy fancy into one of more decided abstraction, when the oppressed faculties lie dormant, and the more ethereal part of our nature is permitted to wander whither it listeth.

Almost every subject connected with ancient *Misraim* came before my imagination in the most admirable confusion of chronologies and localities. First I fancied myself beside the river of Egypt, heard the plaintive cry of the infant in the bulrushes, and followed the daughter of Pharaoh to the inmost recesses of the hareem, where she hid her foundling and its Israelite foster-mother. I could see her trepidation when the Pharaoh, seeking repose and abstraction from the weighty cares of government,

> "To unbend the evening hours,
> And banquet private in the women's bowers,"

wended his way too near the spot where lay the condemned infant of Israel. Again I saw the mighty Necho upon his throne of ivory, gold, and pearls, receiving in state the chiefs of the warrior caste, on the eve of their departure for Assyria; the marble courts resounding with the clank of hoofs, the roll of chariots, and the din of warriors pressing on for the march. Anon I saw pouring forth from the temple and groves of Vulcan a procession of priests of the tribe of Noph, assisted by all the college of On, hastening to attend the summons of the haughty Pharaoh, and to confront their seers and magi with the leader of Israel, who, having been taught by themselves "in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," independent of his divine commission, was therefore able to cope with them in the deepest subtleties of their craft. Following them to the audience-chamber of their Pharaoh, I there assisted at that memorable strife, wherein all the wisest men of Egypt, her "sorcerers" and "magicians," calling upon the name of Ammon, and prostrating themselves before Isis and Osiris, implored their assistance in aid of their incantations against the messengers of the great "I AM." I saw the rod of Aaron leap into a serpent, the limpid stream run blood "throughout all the land of Egypt," frogs and loathsome creatures spread over every spot of earth, and on man and beast. I saw the

fields strewed and the highways choked up with the smitten cattle of Egypt, while "of the cattle of the children of Israel there died not one." I heard loud lament for the slain "of all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon."

It came to pass that Memphis should bury her dead; but how was it possible that the millions slain by the hand of the true God could all obtain the rites of burial according to their faith? I saw thousands of agonized mothers clinging to the skirts of the priesthood, beseeching that the corpses of their firstborn might not be cast into the river or lost in the sands of the desert. Only the wealthy and the powerful found means to purchase or enforce compliance.

I saw Pharaoh and all his host of chariots depart in pursuit of the fugitives of Israel, never more to return. At home I saw all Egypt as one great funeral, when a universal dirge and wail resounded throughout the land, "and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead."

In my dream I saw boats arriving from every quarter, with the bodies of some mighty or illustrious dead, brought by friends that Memphis might bury them; quays choked up with bales of "fine linen," of gums, frankincense, and myrrh, spices and asphaltum; the grove and temple resembling one vast slaughter-house, with thousands of priests at their revolting but profitable trade of preparing the bodies for the long sleep which awaited them. The solemn day arrived when Memphis should bury her dead. Then was seen the most imposing spectacle that ever Egypt knew. Even Osiris and Typhon that day laid aside their mortal strife, Isis and Nepthys their perpetual jealousies. Harpocrates, in silent mystery, stood meditating on the scene around him. Horus, Serapis, and all the venerated deities of Misraim were called upon to assist at the grand obsequies.

The wide portals of the great temple flew open, and a procession of priests, led by their great pontiff, issued therefrom, clothed in all the horrid and disgusting forms of their animal deities.

Pouring forth from the sacred gate, and passing the palace of Pharaoh, the loud wailings for the drowned host first met their ear. All Memphis joined in the deep lament, while each family, bearing a corpse, mingled in the throng, which filled the sacred way to Egypt's tombs.

Like a mighty, rushing wind, I fancied those awful sounds came swelling onward, until in the hollow caverns beneath me they reverberated in loud and appalling echoes. It seemed to me as if the millions below were again starting into life; such yells, such screams and death-wails as met my ear, so horrified me that I sprang upon my feet in an agony of terror, as if the regions of Pluto had been opening to receive me. Mechanically I flew to the terrace, in order to ascertain if what I had seen and heard was reality or a dream. The day had just dawned, and not a soul was yet stirring without; all was quiet as the graves around me, save now and then a hideous yell, which appeared to proceed from the bowels of the earth, rolling and reverberating from cavern to cavern, making the rocks almost to tremble beneath my feet. I could scarcely believe that I was yet awake. On inquiring, I found that all my last terrors had some foundation, though proceeding from a very simple cause. The adjoining cavern had been appropriated as a stable for our animals and bedchamber for the donkey-boys, and these, ever since early dawn, had been keeping up a concert of discordant sounds, such as neighing of horses, braying of asses, screaming of mules, and quarrelling of donkey-boys for their mingled and entangled trappings. These noises being remediless, we were obliged to submit to them. While our breakfast was preparing, I walked out to take a view of the splendid landscape by sunrise. The sun was

just rising over the Arabian mountains, and had tipped the highest pyramid with a point of gold, while its base yet lay in the uncertain obscurity of the gray dawn.

After our morning meal, we entered the great Pyramid by sliding down its granite tunnel, and climbing the inclined plane of the interior; but as for me, I saw nothing of interest save an empty sarcophagus, which once, perhaps, contained a Pharaoh's mummy. Bats and spiders, dust and heat, made up the rest of the entertainment. I soon prayed for fresh air, and was conducted once more to the open day, satisfied that such expeditions were better suited to the taste of the antiquary and wonder-monger than to mine.

We next visited the colossal Sphinx, about which so much has been said.

> "Not that fierce Sphinx that Thebes erewhile laid waste;
> But great Latona's servant mild and bland."

As far as it was uncovered, we could make a pretty good estimate of its dimensions; and although it has made a great noise in the world, and its size is not at all exaggerated, yet I cannot agree that it was, as represented by travellers, so Herculean a work to execute. A notch was first cut out of the shelf of a soft rock, leaving a part of the mass insulated. This mass (a hundred feet more or less is of little consequence, when there is no question of transportation) could more easily be shaped into the form of some living or imaginary animal, than smaller blocks of stone could be brought from the distant quarry, and then piled on one another, high in the air, to compose a temple or a pyramid. A few hundred men, with some months' picking, would pare down any of our freestone hills into quite as great a lion as this same Egyptian wonder.

Continuing our route southward over the terrace which overlooks the valley of the Nile, we rode over many miles of the site of this immense Necropolis. Frequently we were in danger of stumbling into the shaft of some mummy-pit,

left open by the plundering Bedouins, who, in defiance of the laws of the pacha, continue to search for treasure in these vast receptacles of the dead; and, in default thereof, are satisfied with procuring their daily supply of fuel, in the shape of dried Egyptians.

We soon came to a spot which our guides said was the great depository of mummied birds. The old Egyptians, as you know, embalmed almost all the vile animals they worshipped, save such as were good to eat; for of these latter sort no mummies have yet been found. The priests of that day, like the good monks and friars of our own time, loved good cheer too well to stow away under ground their beef and mutton. If they worshipped the "golden calf," and sacrificed living ones at his shrine, only the blood and offal helped to feed the altar's blaze, while the better veal was reserved for a less holy fire. Crocodiles, and now and then a cat or dog, are found enveloped in "fine linen," seethed in asphaltum, and coopered up in staves of cassia; but you never find a sheep or goat. The ibis, a sort of bird of prey, or scavenger bird, going about like the stork, picking up frogs, young serpents, and the like, was sainted and placed in the calendar of Egyptian deities, his holy carcass embalmed, put into an earthen vessel, sealed up, and packed away in a natural cave in the rocks of the Libyan desert.

I remained above ground while the gentlemen descended a perpendicular shaft, about three feet diameter, by holes cut in each side wherein to put their feet. They represented the place as divided into various chambers, all filled with these jars, piled up in regular order. This receptacle, no doubt, yet contains many millions, although for centuries the curious have been carrying them away. We had a large number brought to the surface, and after wantonly dashing them to pieces, and pulling apart the cerements of the gods within, we left most of them scattered over the ground, where hundreds of thousands had been strewed before, directing

our servants to bring away a dozen of them to Cairo, to add another item to my small Egyptian cabinet.

The whole of this high desert plain, from the great Pyramids of Gizeh to those of Sakkarah, for fifteen miles, is strewed with the remains of tombs of all shapes, in ruins, and innumerable pyramids, of all sizes and of various materials, in a more or less perfect state. Many that were built of unburned bricks have crumbled into mere conical heaps of rubbish, very much resembling those vast and numerous tumuli which I have observed scattered over the *steppes* of New Russia, on the confines of Crim Tartary.

This day we saw numbers of granite sarcophagi lying on the surface of the ground, taken from the artificial caverns beneath. The general opinion is, that this whole plain is undermined, from Gizeh to Sakkarah, a distance of fifteen miles in length, the width unknown, perhaps one mile. It is also supposed that there was an underground communication from the great Pyramids to Memphis, twelve miles distant. The evening of the second day we found our tent pitched near Sakkarah. On our arrival at the camp, the consul discovered that Mustafa, our quartermaster, had not placed the tent exactly on the spot he had been directed to; and he is generally in the habit of being obeyed to the letter in all his commands. He now ordered the tent to be placed as he had at first directed, although but a few yards off. This was not a mere whim in our consul, as I at first supposed, but found afterward that we were better protected from the night wind in the proper location than in the one Mustafa had blundered into. This gave me an opportunity of seeing, for the first time, a large tent struck and pitched, and in the true scientific manner. The whole operation did not require over twenty minutes.

After dinner, a pleasant evening succeeded to a fatiguing day. The division curtains were next put up, and we all had an excellent night and no more dreams. Although not

in the least superstitious, I do not think I shall ever be persuaded to sleep again in a tomb.

The next day we rode to the site of Memphis. The field of ruins is not extensive, for the reason, first, that all the principal materials of value in architecture were two thousand years ago taken to Alexandria, and for centuries after, both old and new Cairo have here quarried out stone, ready cut and squared, in preference to going to the mountain for it.

In the next place, the ancient dikes having long ago been broken, the annual inundations for many centuries have deposited many feet of alluvium over the foundations of the great city. There are existing very extensive mounds, which, if opened, I have no doubt, would disclose some as fine ruins as the late opened mounds of Alexandria now present. For centuries past the precise situation of Memphis was undetermined, and much speculation existed as to its locality. History placed it near the head of the Delta, just above the point of separation of the different branches of the river. It is but very recently that some excavations have placed the matter beyond all doubt. Persons who visited Memphis before its destruction describe its temple of Vulcan, with the colossal statue of Sesostris before its gates. The statue lies there now uncovered, being thrown from its pedestal, and the foundations of the temple plainly to be seen close to it. It is not of granite, but of a yellowish stone, beautifully cut, and in a perfect state of preservation. It lies with its face downward, and quite unbroken. Indeed, it is a miracle how it could fall from its former position without being dashed to pieces against the pavement on which it lies. This immense monolith has been presented by the pacha to the British Museum; and Mr. G. having been desired by the directors to make an estimate of the cost of raising it from its present position, transporting it to the Nile, and thence to Alexandria, it became necessary to make a calculation of its weight, by taking a correct admeasure-

ment of its cubic volume. This he did while we were ram bling among the few remains of Pharaoh's capital. The height of the statue is, if I recollect right, about 50 feet.

There is, therefore, no longer any doubt as to the exact site of Memphis.

We rode for several miles through a grove of palm-trees, on the left bank of the river, and then crossed, a few miles above Cairo, to visit the great military school. There we saw many regiments of young Egyptians, drilled by native subaltern officers, under the command of some foreign officers of high rank and distinction. One division of artillery were exercising with field-pieces, firing across the plain at a target, placed in front of an immense mound of earth to catch and save the shot. I was much amused at the hit-or-miss *nonchalance* of those who levelled the pieces; they rarely made a point-blank shot; almost every ball would strike the ground many hundred yards short of the target, and then, rebounding, would sail high in the air over the embankment, and then, after many a hop, skip, and jump, would lose itself in the sands of the desert. Near the city I saw an encampment of Syrian troops, brought here to replace as many Egyptians, sent to keep their own country under the iron rule of Mohammed Ali, through his son Ibrahim.

We returned to our hotel, after a three days' campaign, very much delighted with what we had seen, and the novel mode of travelling by day and quarters for the night. We also were much indebted to Mr. G. for his politeness, attention, and information. * * * * *

Sans adieu, I bid you again good-night.

LETTER XIII.

Cairo the Magnificent.—Its Architecture.—Modernized Turks.—Egyptian Franks.—A Picture.—The Plague.—How to tame a Bedouin.

Grand Cairo, ——.

YES, GRAND Cairo! And why not Grand Cairo as well as grand duke, or grand sultan, or any of the other grand names of these grandiloquent days? When the Fatimite dynasty of califs reigned in splendour in this their once proud capital, they were content to call it *El Cahira*, The Cairo. But when "*le petit caporal*" of "*La Grande Nation*" installed himself in the stronghold of Amru and of Saladin, he *Frenchified* its name into *Le Grand Caire; Anglicé*, Grand Cairo.

"What's in a name?" you say. "The rose by any other name would smell as sweet." True; but "the superb town, the holy city, the delight of the imagination, greatest among the great, whose splendour and opulence made the Prophet smile," has passed away. If the Prophet were now to smile, it would be in derision of the sickly fungi revelling in the annual slime of Egypt's river, or of the wasting parasites clinging to Cahira's ruined walls, and sapping the foundations of her

"Round old towers of other times;"

or in contempt for the ignoble and degenerate race who now "flaunt in rags" where once the Persian satraps were wont to "flutter in brocade."

The novelty of my first impressions begins to wear off, and Cairo of the nineteenth century stands out in bold relief from the few beautiful remains of *El Cahira*, of poetic and romantic memory, of which we always delight to read, and which we still more desire to visit.

Of the latter there now only remain a few stately mosques, with their Saracenic domes and minarets, going fast to decay; some curious tombs in the environs, several ruined palaces of former wealthy individuals, remarkable only for their interior structure and ornament, and their stained glass windows, from which were derived those beautiful windows of the Gothic cathedrals of western Europe; several singular Persian fountains, and numerous arabesque sculptures on the imposts and lintels of the doors of private houses, apparently once much in fashion, and no doubt of very high antiquity for Cairo.

The reason for my latter supposition is, that all the houses of Cairo have the first story built of strong cut stone, and all the upper stories of wood, or lath and plaster, and sometimes of unburned bricks; the superstructure being of such mean materials and so slightly put together, that they decay much sooner than the basement. The nature of the climate, however, protects these card-houses much longer than in more northern and humid climates. But the stonework rarely decays, and fashion in building never changes in the East. I send you some sketches of these singular doorways, which, together with the other drawings, will serve to convey to your mind some of the impressions of travelling in the palmy days of *El Cahira*, under its Fatimite sovereigns, and previous to the reign of the barbarous and destroying Turk. The times when the princely merchants of Arabia and India met here on common ground with those of Fez and Cordova, Genoa and Venice, by whose traffic this city became so wealthy and so powerful that it obtained among the Eastern nations the appellation of "*greatest among the great*," &c., &c.

The ruins of Saladin's palace, and those of the subsequent Mameluke beys, are connecting links between the good old times of *El Cahira*, those of its reverses under the Turks, of its subsequent retrograde march in the reign of anarchy,

and that of its complete degradation in the nineteenth century, when Western Europe chose to make the fields of Egypt its battle-ground.

There is here at present an extraordinary contrast between the architectural possessions of the governors and the governed. Wooden palaces of a semi-Italian style, gayly painted, whitewashed cotton-mills, arsenals, and military schools, huge warehouses and commercial depôts, are the types of power. Dilapidated buildings, their exterior covered with the dust of decayed stucco, their lath fibres and timber ribs protruding through the lacerated skin of mud plaster; wooden lattice-work without paint, brown with age and dust, together with filthy entrances, are the exterior characteristics of the dwellings of the people. Two or three handsome English and French gardens, belonging to the pacha and his son, contrast singularly with the general absence of all such private pleasure-grounds as are seen within and around perhaps every other city in the world; at least I have never before seen an instance to the contrary during my few wanderings.

The pacha and a few other dignitaries retain the old Turkish costume; many of his native satellites have adopted the semi-European dress of the Constantinople government officers and dependants—tight pantaloons, vest, and frock-coat, the common under-boot of Europe, and sometimes white stockings and shoes, and even the long outside boot is sometimes seen to adorn their nether man. The only thing not European is the scarlet *fez* (a fashion adopted from Morocco) in place of the old turban, and instead of the round Frank hat. As a modern poet has written of Turkey, so also it may be said of Egypt, or at least of Cairo,

> "Steamboats on Turkish waters float—
> The Turk wears pantaloons and coat,
> And hat, and boots, just like a Frank,
> And talks of chartering a bank—

Of locomotives, railroads, cars—
And drinks his wine, and smokes segars,
And gives up coffee for green tea,
And Mahmoud sets his ladies free."

A heavy slouching turban, a greasy silk gown, kept together with a faded French imitation cotton shawl, a pair of dirty red or yellow slippers, and a tattered embroidered cotton handkerchief peeping out of pocket, make up the outer man of ninety and nine out of every hundred natives one meets in the streets and bazars of Cairo. I am perfectly aware that some of this class of persons present a far more agreeable exterior when at home, and one more in conformity with their general urbane and graceful manners and manly features. But then the proportion here of those who creep along in tatters through the public streets, that they may the more uninterruptedly and securely worship their *penates* in Babylonish garments, and in all the pride of Oriental luxury, is small indeed in comparison with that found in the little world of Constantinople. Here there are not so many roads to opulence, and the streams of wealth are all ravenously swallowed up by the huge leviathan who holds the sceptre of Egypt.

One of the most amusing things in Cairo is to observe the physiognomy and costume of the motley tribe of *Franks* whom one sees stealing about the purlieus of the bazars and market-places. (Of course I except the few European gentlemen who either belong to the diplomacy, or are residents here for some scientific object, and also the foreign officers of rank in the army and household of the pacha.) Twenty times in a day I am reminded by the razor face, lizard form, and rueful countenance of some Italian, French, Perotte, or Smyrniote Frank, of the luckless wight in the play who styles himself "Sylvester Daggerwood," and I cannot restrain my merriment when I see him pull out his ragged pocket furniture. It pictures in such a graphic manner the

scene where poor Sylvester, in rehearsing Othello, displays his tattered cambric, and in the most inflated style exclaims, "This handkerchief an Egyptian to my mother gave."

If one were desirous of making a *recueil* of all the various costumes of Western Europe, from the days of Beau Nash to those of the immortal Brummel, one need but sit down with his sketch-book at the corner of Frank-street in Cairo. The pencil of a Hogarth would find full employment there.

From the ill-assorted and grotesque Frank costumes seen here at all times, one would suppose that the last fifty years' sweepings of all the old clothes shops in Europe had been collected in the great square, in a heap as high and as universally assorted as the mountain of cast-off deformities before the throne of Rhadamanthus.

Then, as many impatient unfortunates waiting around as there were at that famous scramble, each one, not choosing, but taking what he could get. And he who is curious in languages need walk but a few times past the door of a Frank *café* to become upon terms of intimacy with that child of many fathers, the *lingua Franca* of the East; a language of as many dialects as there are places between Trieste and Trebizonde, and from Moscow to Mocha.

A few evenings since, the gentlemen (through the polite intervention of Mr. Gliddon) were introduced to the pacha. They informed me that they were received very politely by the old gentleman, but that he appeared weak from his late indisposition; and, after compliments and coffee had passed, they took their leave, much gratified with having seen the lion in his lair. They were not obliged to "*faire anti-chambre*" a long while; and on entering, found his highness seated on a chair, with three empty chairs placed before him, which they were requested to occupy. A government dragoman, who spoke good French, interpreted for them. They had some conversation; but such was their desire to scrutinize and observe the features of this singular person-

age during their very short interview, that they lost the faculty of making any fine speeches to him, and after a few commonplaces they withdrew.

Their night ride through the town and up the castle hill they describe as being of a very singular and impressive nature, and I find that I lost much in not accompanying them, at least, as far as the castle gate.

They had horses sent to them from the pacha's stables. When they left home, it being quite dark, and the streets of Cairo not lighted as in European cities, and the houses having no lighted windows in front, besides the shops being all shut, and no inhabitants abroad, the dark and narrow streets were like so many prison avenues, and the little low stone arched doorways like entrances to the cells.

They were preceded by several persons carrying torches, or, rather, burning pitch-pine fagots in a sort of cylindrical grate on the top of long poles. They describe the effect of this light on the beautiful remains of Saracenic sculpture on many of the doorways as very fine, and the effect produced by the architecture of the mosques as like that of some of the finest Moorish scenes at the Grand Opera of Paris; only on a grander scale, and with the assurance of *reality*, to give the whole a character not to be met with anywhere else.

The procession glided noiselessly along, and nothing save the smothered tramp of the horses' feet on the soft unpaved ways broke the universal silence. Before and behind them was Egyptian darkness, and the scene was like a moving panorama. The glare of the burning pine brought, in rapid succession, out of the dense obscurity in front, each new feature, and shadowed forth a succession of pictures such as none but a *Del Notte* could paint.

Our preparations are now nearly all made for our excursion to the upper country, but we have had a very serious alarm for several days past on account of rumours of the

plague. The universal impression is, that there will be a general explosion of it here before one month, in which case, should it ascend the river, and shut us up in Nubia, or drive us in the hot season into Abyssinia, we could not descend the river again for a long time without too much risk. What, then, must be done? Wait *here* the event, and then retreat across the desert to Syria? That would be to *lose* nearly all that is worth seeing in Egypt. We have hit upon a much better plan. To leave here as soon as possible, go as far up the river as we may find it agreeable and interesting, and then return to Thebes. By that time the *crisis* in the season here will have developed itself, and Mr. G. will send us an express dromedary with intelligence of the health of the lower country. In case of the plague breaking out, we are then to go across to Cosseir, and there take a vessel up the Red Sea to Mount Sinai. There we have arranged that Mr. G. is to send us a caravan, with a fine large tent, which he has now ordered to be made for us; another of smaller dimensions we take with us for short excursions into the deserts on each side of the river. Mr. G. is also to send to us at Sinai an extra supply of stores of all sorts, and will arrange all matters with the sheik of *Acaba*, that we shall meet with a good supply of camels for our journey to *Jerusalem*, stopping, of course, by the way to see that great cleft in the rock in which some antiquaries maintain the *Petra* of scripture was situated, while others, perhaps, on better authority, place it much farther north.

We, of course, should have to traverse that *land of Idumea*, through which it has been prophesied that "*no man should pass for ever and ever.*" I think that "*for ever and ever*" ought to be revised by the translators of the good old book, for to my certain knowledge two English gentlemen passed through and through the same last year, and our Don Giovanni was their greatest man, and is boon companion with

all the sheiks between here and *Moab*. It seems that a very few whiffs of his chibouck either melt their stony hearts or turn their lively brain, and I would never give him more than half an hour to gain the love of the greatest bully in all Arabia.

In case we shall not be able to return to Cairo, we have requested Mr. G. to send for the sheik of Accaba, and make such pecuniary arrangements as are necessary to prevent the petty annoyances and delays which travellers over that road are always subjected to, unless they *begin* by making the *proper* arrangement, and then make up their minds at once to give the poor creatures a good *backshee;* which, however, when divided among all their wretched tribe, I am told, will only, after all, amount to a few days' extra tobacco or coffee per man. A French traveller who resides in Cairo says that, during his long residence at Petra for the purpose of making his entensive and accurate drawings and measurements of the place, he used to *feed* the Arabs. He gave them a sheep and some rice each day, and they were not only harmless, but would come and sit by him, and overlook his work in the most friendly manner. But then, like all other wild carnivorous animals, you must *keep them fed* while you remain among them. We hope that we shall be able to return to Cairo to make our own arrangements, and not impose so much upon the politeness and kindness of Mr. G., who is ever most willing to do all he can for our countrymen who visit Egypt.

He has caused to be built a very fine boat for the navigation of the upper part of the river, with two good cabins, in which one can stand erect, which cannot be done in any of the country boats. She has just returned from Thebes, with the family of the English consul of Alexandria, who have been upon a trip of pleasure.

* * * * * * * *

The gentlemen have just informed me that everything is

on board, and that we sail early to-morrow morning; consequently, I must now leave off scribbling ere I have spoiled one half of my usual quantity of paper.

The desultory manner in which I am obliged to write serves to introduce many things which doubtless must be unentertaining to you. Perhaps the voyage to the upper country, and the historic and monumental plains of the *Thebaid*, may furnish me with something that will interest you. Entertaining this hope, I now bid you once more

Adieu.

LETTER XIV.

Sailing up the Nile.—The Nilometer.—Site of Babylon.—The Outfit.—Egyptian Pleasure-boat.—Time Economized.—The Children of Israel.—How to make Straw Bricks.—Peculiarity of the Nile.—The way they do things in the East.—How to make a Canal.—Visit from a Bey.—Robbers of the Nile.

Thebes, ——.

Now, then, for the city of the "*hundred gates, as sung by Homer*," I hear you exclaim: but calm a little your impatience, my dear lady; for, although I date, indeed, from Thebes, I have not yet seen the place, nor even "the make of the land" about it; nor am I likely very soon to see either. I have been on the tiptoe of expectation to arrive this evening at the most interesting point of all my travels, but the north wind failed us; and we have been toiling all the day against the rapid current, and not made ten miles. Just about sunset the wind sprang up, and has been ever since increasing to a "wholesale breeze," with certain meteorological indications (seen only by the initiated navigators) of its continuance for several days. At a certain time of life, most of us have picked up sufficient experience in the world's affairs to feel the importance of a *fair wind*, and to profit by it in all matters, even at the sacrifice of much personal com-

fort or pleasure. I have just learned from the gentlemen that they have determined to take advantage of the favourable gale, to make the best of their way to the Cataracts, and visit Thebes on our way down the river. As it is now many days since I have written you, I feel that I should not be fulfilling my promise if I did not send you something by every opportunity. Having just been informed that we shall meet a boat to-morrow morning bound for Cairo, I shall therefore send you a few lines.

It was, however, my intention not to put pen again to paper (except in making my daily notes) until I arrived at that goal which so many travellers strive to attain, and which so few ever have the good fortune to reach. I desired, before again addressing you, to catch a little inspiration from the air of Thebes, to feel my heart gladdened by the sight of *Luxor*, and my drooping spirits roused by the contemplation of the sublime ruins of *Carnac* and the *Memnonium*.

While I am now writing, we are rapidly passing the ruins of Carnac and Luxor on our left, and the *Memnonium*, with the musical statue, on our right; but darkness envelops the whole, and the strong northern blast is driving our prow against the angry surges of the chafed Nile, which here divides the "City of the Gods."

As we cannot enjoy the present, return with me, then, to Cairo, and let us dwell upon the retrospect.

My last left us about embarking on the river for our up country voyage. It was a beautiful morning when we started, and we had the society of several of our Cairo friends, who remained with us for some hours, their horses being led along the bank. During our lingering and protracted adieus, although no *lachrymatories* were needed for the occasion, I observed several bottles uncorked, and their contents poured over the drooping spirits of the party. As for me, it was stimulus enough to feel myself moving onward, and losing sight of the domes and minarets of Cairo, which look down

in proud contempt upon its dirty lanes and wooden shantees.

The first object of interest which was pointed out to me was the celebrated *Nilometer*, by which the Pharaohs measured the increase of the rising waters, that were to dispense the blessings of fertility over their amphibious dominions, and which has, from that time to the present, been the standard of taxation and exaction. Its horizontal lines served as the basis of calculation whereby to arrange the amount of territorial imposts by the "*ruler over all Egypt*," during the seven years of plenty, and as a warning against unjust oppression during the succeeding years of famine, when the mark of overflow, never moistened by the fertilizing flood, was seven times heated in the fiery furnace of divine wrath, without a drop of water to cool its consuming heat. Since then, the Persian, the Greek, the Roman, the Saracen, and the Turk, have, each in his turn, consulted this talisman in order to estimate the future golden harvest, and to calculate what share might justly fall into their own coffers; but it was reserved for the Albanian oppressor, the "*Great Regenerator*," to make *false reports* to the nation of the annual rise of waters, in order to justify his onerous exactions from an oppressed and enslaved people.

On our left was the site of *Babylon*, the city built by the Persians opposite to Memphis, and now covered by what remains of *old* Cairo. A short distance beyond was a chateau on the banks of the river, now occupied by a colony of *St. Simonians* from France, and under the verandah a very venerable personage was pointed to me as the *Père Enfantin* himself.

Here our friends left us, and we began the voyage on our own account. I will endeavour to give you some idea of our *outfit;* but, before I begin, I will state that those Europeans who ascend the Nile always take up one of the vile boats of the country, which they first cause to be sunk

in order to rid it of the poisonous infections that lurk within it, and also to drown the numerous tribes with which they all abound. This precaution is never omitted previous to embarking by any except the most careless and heedless. I remember being informed by two American gentlemen in Paris, that they both contracted the smallpox from their boat, which they learned afterward had been used to transport a cargo of black slaves from Abyssinia to Cairo. They had no physician, but quacked themselves (with perhaps some useful hints from the natives) and recovered. Our boat, as I said before, having been built under the superintendence of our consul, expressly for a passage-boat for Europeans, had never harboured any natives, either biped, quadruped, or centipede, and hence there was no occasion for any other detergent process than the usual lustration by mops and brooms, and its annual coat of fresh paint. The cabins are half below and half above the main-deck, and of sufficient height to stand erect in. On each side are divans raised two feet from the floor, with sufficient space for a table in the centre. There is just enough accommodation for four persons, two in each cabin. A pair of folding-doors separate the gentlemen's cabin from mine, and in the stern a window three feet high opens upon a sort of platform six feet square, where I sometimes get out and sit at night after all have gone to rest, and the breeze is gently wafting us past the steep Arabian mountains, on one side the river, and the extensive alluvial plains on the other. One of the raised divans holds my mattress, the other my portmanteaux, bookcase, and other personal effects. Carpets, curtains, and moscheto-net finish the *ensemble* of my most comfortable quarters. On each side of the saloon, or gentlemen's apartment, are shelves for books, instruments, &c. The four divan platforms serve as so many lockers for stores.

The partition between the cabins displays a formidable ar-

ray of guns, pistols, sabres, and hatchets, kept bright and always ready for active service. This arsenal can be seen by every person on deck from the very bow of the boat, and is held *in terrorem* over any mutinous spirit which might exist among the crew. Whenever we go on shore, as a precautionary measure, we always leave in the cabin a trusty European, and one Arab servant, with half of the arms. From the cabin-door to the first mast there is about fifteen feet of space, which is covered with a fine matting, and sheltered by an awning. This is our lounging-place on wide divans, and our reception-room for such natives of *distinction* as we may choose to admit into our presence. About eight feet in front of the mast there is a barrier placed across the deck, over which no Arab sailor dare place his foot, and it is here we had caused to be built a gastronomic altar of good burned brick, furnished with a long row of fire holes; and this is the *sanctum sanctorum* of Monsieur François and his assistants. No other foot dare presume to invade these sacred premises.

Forward of this barrier, the remainder of the deck and hold is assigned for the use of the crew, sixteen in number. You will perceive, by the sketch I now send you, that our vessel is felucca rigged, with two short masts, and on each an immensely long yard, standing at an angle of forty-five degrees with the mast, with the lowest arm short and stout, the other tapering off to a point seventy feet high in the air.

The sail is triangular, and this immense sheet of canvass is managed with more skill, judgment, dexterity, and celerity than the sails of any small vessel I ever saw, not excepting even those paragons of beauty and speed, our Albany sloops and the Sandy Hook pilot-boats.

The vessel is steered by a long rudder similar to our Durham boats, with the tiller and helmsman on the roof of our cabin. A small skiff or two completes our marine establishment.

The usual complement for such a boat is a reis (captain), steersman, and eight men before the mast. The boat drawing more than the usual depth of water for up-river navigation, and the river fast approaching to its lowest stage, the gentlemen proposed to the consul to supply us with a double set of hands, in order to facilitate our progress, and save time and tide. So we started with sixteen hands before the mast, divided into two watches; one for towing by day, and the other by night, when the wind failed us; in case of head wind, the whole party being so strong as to enable us to make at least twelve hours headway, instead of mooring the whole twenty-four at a stake, or basking in the sun like crocodiles on a sandbank, as we have seen some English travellers doing, while we gayly passed them, with the star-spangled banner waving triumphantly over our heads. Every person who navigates the Nile is obliged to hoist the flag of his nation, in order to command respect from the natives, and to protect the boat from being seized by petty government officers, who are in the habit of pressing into their own service every boat, vehicle, or animal they can get hold of.

The first day of our embarcation we made a subdivision of time, in such a manner as to permit us to make the most profitable use of it. We rise at dawn of day, and take a short turn on shore while the breakfast-table is prepared. In case there are any excursions to make away from the boat, Ali, while we are at table, puts into requisition as many donkeys as may be necessary. Giovanni puts on our own saddles, arranges the arms, calls upon François for a basket of lunch; and my boy Selim takes charge of the books, portfolio, and telescope, not forgetting umbrellas and pipes.

When we are mounted and off, our boatmen, perhaps, are occupied for many hours in doubling some great bend in the river, which, after a circuit of many miles, returns nearly to the same place where we left it. Thus we make

out to save ourselves a most monotonous drag of several hours against the current, and to take in our way some interesting ruin or locality. During the heat of the day we read, write, and take a siesta, dine just before sundown, and then, in the cool of the day, we take another trip on shore. The fine moonlight evenings we spend upon the deck in conversation, rehearsing over the adventures of the day.

We retire at ten o'clock, the gentlemen to sleep, and myself to make notes, and occasionally to hold sweet communion with friends far away, where the evening star, sinking below the sands of Africa, points towards the land of the West and the home of the free. A few hours of this delightful occupation cause me to forget the fatigues of the day, the distance from friends, the dangers I have past and those I have yet before me, and then a sound, sweet, and refreshing sleep prepares me for the duties of another day. The whole working together for good, so that pleasure and health, amusement and instruction, are the result of every revolution of the sun.

The second day after our departure we saw on our left the quarries whence a considerable part of the materials for the three great Pyramids were taken, and in which it is said a portion of the children of Israel were employed to hew stone when "there rose up a new king over Egypt who knew not Joseph." The immense pyramid of unburned bricks on our right was, no doubt, the work of another portion of the oppressed Israelites, whose lives the taskmasters of the same Pharaoh made "bitter with hard bondage in mortar and in brick;" and when they murmured against their hard fate, the command of the tyrant was followed out to the letter.

"Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves;" "and the tale of the bricks which they did make heretofore ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish aught thereof."

Apropos of the "straw" for making bricks: I confess that, until I visited Egypt, I always supposed that the "straw" and the stubble were used for burning the brick; and perhaps you may have a similar impression whenever you read the same passage of Scripture.

In this dry climate, unburned bricks are mostly used; and, in order to give the clay more tenacity, a large proportion of chopped straw is worked into it in the pit; without which, or something for a substitute, as coarse dry grass or "stubble," the bricks would crumble to pieces in handling, after being dried in the sun.

The harvest in Egypt, as well as in all the East, is either trodden out by beasts, or is worked out by a sort of loaded carriage drawn over it by animals on a circular "threshing-floor;" the straw being so very dry and brittle, as well as so stout and reedy, that these processes reduce it to the consistency of chopped straw. I have seen boats innumerable passing us on the river, and as large as Mississippi arks, loaded up twenty feet high with this provender for cattle and "straw for bricks."

The gentlemen, besides keeping a logbook, make observations on the weather four times each day: at eight A.M. and twelve, at four and eight P.M. The 2d of March, their table shows by Fahrenheit the lowest heat fifty-six, and highest sixty-six; but the temperature has gradually risen, until this day, 13th March, we have sixty-six for the lowest, and seventy-seven for the highest; four P.M. always marking the greatest number of degrees.

Throughout the night of the second it rained violently, a thing which I did not expect to see in Egypt; but I am told that such occurrences are confined entirely to Lower Egypt, where we experienced it.

Between the site of Memphis and the ruins of Thebes, a distance of five hundred miles, there are but few objects of antiquity in which I take much interest. The temple of

Denderah, the tombs of Beni Hassan, and a few other important objects I will notice to you hereafter.

Notwithstanding frequent fair winds, we have not neglected visiting all the most important localities on each side the river as far as Genneh (opposite to Denderah), where we shall be obliged to leave the river for Cossier in case the plague should break out in Lower Egypt.

With respect to the width of the river, it is a difficult matter for me to define it, such is the irregularity of its surface, sometimes confined between high banks, and quite deep and rapid; at others spreading very wide, and full of shoals. It may at this season average three quarters of a mile. One thing there is quite peculiar to the Nile, belonging, perhaps, to no other river in the world. From the junction of its two principal branches in Abyssinia to the sea at Alexandria, a distance of perhaps one thousand miles, it does not receive a single tributary stream, not a rill the size of one's finger, that I could see or hear of. Therefore, by the evaporation, absorption in the sandy soil, and the immense quantity of water taken from it in so long a course by the thousands of hydraulic machines used for irrigating the lands, the volume of water must necessarily decrease as it descends towards the sea. The river, to me, appears of greater width and depth here than at Cairo; and in an inverse ratio to all other rivers, it appears to increase in volume at this season as one advances towards its source.

On every side canals are kept open, which take an immense quantity of water from the parent stream, and dispense it over the adjoining country quite to the desert. One of the ancient canals, about one hundred miles below, having become filled up and useless for many centuries, the country it formerly irrigated had been all that time entirely useless after the first crop succeeding the general inundation. A new governor having lately been appointed to that district, he suddenly conceived the idea of reopening this

canal, and ordered a levy, *en masse*, of all the men, women, and children of the country for many miles round. For a great distance both above and below, we found all the villages deserted, and not a single person to be seen. All had fled to the mountains and desert, after burying what little property they possessed, there to remain until the cause of the oppression should have been removed, by the labour and lives of those who had not had the good fortune to escape from the clutches of the ruthless Turk.

One morning, after our men had been toiling all night at the drag-rope, we came in sight of a Turkish encampment, which I was informed was that of this same governor of Upper Egypt, who was now engaged in inspecting the progress of his impromptu canal, and directing the strokes of bamboo in order to facilitate those of the spade.

This engineer governor was not idle; he did not leave his quiet home and delightful hareem to encamp here in the mud for six weeks, without doing up, *en passant*, all the other little matters which pertain to his office. In order to amuse his leisure hours, and occupy the idle crew which forms his motley household guard, he set about hunting down a certain set of outlaws or land-pirates who had infested the country round for some time past, levying "*black mail*" upon all the villages, and not unfrequently murdering some of their inhabitants, in order to intimidate the rest. I learned that he had caught the chief of the banditti, with several of his associates, after shooting many others. They were to be executed the next day.

The gentlemen sent Giovanni with our firman to his highness, in order to request of him a few more hands, to assist our crew to drag the boat against the strong head winds which retarded our progress. He found his beyship at breakfast in his tent, and delivered the firman, which the Turk placed on the top of his head as soon as he saw the great seal of Mohammed Ali.

When he was informed of our request, he said we should have as many men as we desired, although he could not, just then, spare them without much inconvenience to himself. Our boat was drawn up to the bank opposite his tent, and the gentlemen went to pay their respects to his highness. They found him very affable, and quite disposed to assist us in any way that might be in his power. They invited him to pay us a visit on board our boat; but as such an important matter could not be undertaken without much ceremony, the whole morning was frittered away in the nonsense of preparation.

His highness had to perform a complete toilet before he would venture to pay a visit to the gentlemen's hareem. By the time he was ready the heat of noon arrived, and then the usual siesta of two hours had to be performed. In the mean while, we left our servants to arrange our deck drawing-room in the best manner, by spreading our newest and best carpets over our mattress divans; cooling the decks and awnings by saturating both with Nile water. Monsieur François, who had often before entertained "*a three-tailed bashaw*," was not now to be taken aback by a mere governor bey, so he went very leisurely and systematically about his sherbets and confectionary preparations. We went on shore to view the works going on about the canal. I here saw the same *baby* process of removing earth that I had noticed at Alexandria. Thousands of men were seen breaking up the earth with a sort of hoe, while other thousands of women and children would scrape it up with their hands into small flat baskets of about a peck measure, which they put upon their heads. Then, after each squadron of a few hundreds was thus burdened, they fell into line, and marched off to the place of deposite, all keeping time to some shrill cry, nearly akin to the music of the screech-owl. Fifteen miles of this canal, fifty feet wide and very deep, near the high banks of the river, had been completed in this primitive man-

ner in a few weeks. Returning to our boat, we suddenly stumbled over the dead bodies of several of the banditti who had been shot this morning when the others were captured. It was a horrid sight; the balls had all penetrated the head of each wretch, as he had been shot while swimming in the river. Close by them we saw several soldiers busy in sharpening strong stakes, on which several of the principal robbers were next morning to suffer that most awful of all the punishments invented by man—*impalement alive*. I turned away in horror from the sight of these dreadful preparations, and almost resolved not to see the monster who had been judge and jury, and who was to be directing executioner in this dreadful business.

On my return to the boat I found the bank lined with the bey's guard, and in a few minutes his major domo was seen coming with two attendants to announce that his master had risen from his nap, and that, as soon as his 3 o'clock prayers were disposed of, he would honour us with a visit. Another half hour, and another messenger similarly attended, came to announce the approach of the great man. The tent being situated not over one hundred yards from our boat, I saw something of the court ceremonies of this petty sovereign, his assumed majesty, the affected humility of his officers, and the real abject servility and fear of the subordinates.

He approached our boat with a very imposing air, for he was really as handsome and as noble a Turk as I had ever seen; and, on touching the deck, his *salaams* were as graceful as the reverences of the most polished courtier in Europe.

In my admiration of this splendid son of the Caucasus, I forgot the judge and executioner, and received him as politely and cordially as I was able to do by signs. I paid him the highest honour in my power, which was to place him beside me on the highest divan. Pipes and coffee, of course, were immediately introduced, and a couple of each

were discussed before the conversation had proceeded beyond monosyllables on either side.

After the usual compliments about the fine appearance of the crops in his province, and the great progress of his canal, his lips were unsealed. He said that the canal would require sixteen thousand hands forty days to complete it. He also gave us a short history of his robber trapping, the details of which we had already heard in less elegant language, and loaded with more or less bombast, from the mouth of each hero who had either shot or captured his man.

The bey treated the affair quite *en Turc*, and with an easy *nonchalance* he said, three of them die to-morrow morning, and the rest are to be sent to the galleys for life. He said he perceived by our firman that we were Americans. I doubt if he could read a word of Turkish, or had any idea of what America meant (as we were aware that Ali had been questioned all about us); we answered in the affirmative, and replied also that the flag at our peak was an additional proof of our nationality. He said he knew all about America, for he had seen a great ship (meaning the Delaware) of that nation when he was last at Alexandria, and had been introduced to her officers.

He invited us to call and see him at his palace in Siout, where we should find welcome and good cheer.

After François had showed his highness that he could do some things too, as well as other folks, in the way of sherbets, liqueurs, sponge-cakes, syllabubs, pyramids of maccaronies, and other confectionary of his own manufacture, another pipe and coffee put an end to the interview, and the divan broke up. On leaving, we exchanged cards with the bey. He sent afterward for us to come and see the prisoners. We went a short distance down the bank, where we saw a small boat, but not a soul stirring on board. Several guards were on the bank, and a guard-boat was rowing out.

side. The bey ordered the poor wretches to be brought out. The door was removed, and we discovered, piled on one another, in a place about three feet deep and not more than ten feet long, a dozen beings in the human shape, but resembling demons more than men. One at a time they emerged from this den, until they all stood upon the shore in a row, when I perceived that each one had a massive iron collar round his neck, and each was attached to a strong chain about three feet apart. They were the most abject-looking creatures I ever beheld, with scarcely a rag of covering upon them, having been without food since they were taken, and the apprehension of death every moment weighing upon their spirits. They all supposed that this first summons was their final one, and that they were now about to die. As their eyes caught the dreadful stakes now upright in the ground, they uttered a pitiful cry, and implored our intervention in their behalf. The bey pointed out one fierce-looking Arab, who, he said, was the chief of a great band that had infested the country for some years, and had burned many villages, and caused the death of more than a thousand innocent persons; and that for these crimes he and two of his most notorious accomplices, now chained on each side of him, were to be impaled alive next morning. This explanation being made in Arabic, the certainty of their fate was now first made known to the three principals. I could see the shudder with which they first received this announcement of their awful fate. They knew full well how much they merited it, and how inexorable was their judge. They felt how utterly hopeless was their condition, and with their heads sinking on their breasts they gave themselves up to despair. The scene had begun to sicken me, when the bey politely invited us to stay and be present next morning at the execution. I was so shocked that, without waiting to hear the reply of the gentlemen, I fled away to our own boat without taking leave of his highness.

The gentlemen having declined the invitation, and not desiring to be present at the spectacle, they gave orders for our immediate departure. The bey detailed four of his best bargemen from his own boat, and sent them to us, when we immediately rowed across the river to the deeper channel, and recommenced our towing against wind and stream.

This affair cost us a whole day. With this addition to our crew we made very fair progress; and, but for the favourable gales which sprang up this afternoon, I should now, perhaps, be giving you an account of my first day among the ruins of Thebes, which lie behind us, and which we have passed without seeing.

Where my next will date from I cannot now say. It will depend entirely upon the state of the river and the winds whether or not we go beyond the first Cataracts. You shall hear from me again by the first opportunity. In the mean while, farewell.

LETTER XV.

The Voyage ended.—Thoughts of Home.—Interesting Details.—The Cataracts.—Assouan.—Entrance upon the Desert.—Interesting Localities.—A striking Contrast.—The Fine Arts.

Assouan (Syene), ——.

* * * * CONTRARY to our own expectation and that of our friends in Cairo, we have been enabled to reach the southern extremity of Egypt, even unto the border of Ethiopia, in the short space of *fourteen* days, a distance of six hundred and thirty miles from Cairo, and seven hundred and fifty miles from the embouchure of the river at Rosetta. When the winds were favourable, they were, at the same time, very strong, enabling us, by means of our immense

lateen sails, to make great progress against the current. When there was no wind, our indefatigable Ali kept the tow-lines constantly upon the stretch day and night. Even in heavy head winds we hourly made some progress. The time lost by occasional stops at interesting points during fair winds, with the delays by contrary winds and calms, and the frequent groundings on shoals, prevented our performing the whole voyage to the Cataracts in twelve days.

We have just returned from one of the most interesting excursions I ever made; and, though somewhat overcome by the fatigue consequent upon so much physical exertion and mental excitement, yet, while the impressions caused by the novel and interesting scenes which I have this day enjoyed are still so fresh, I cannot refrain from encroaching on my hours of repose in order to devote one of them to you. My remarks, however, at this time will be brief; but if I had time and strength, I could expatiate upon the occurrences of this day until you would be fatigued with the recital; the impression made on my mind is so strong, that the reminiscence of these scenes will doubtless be as vivid in after years as at this moment. Should I be so fortunate as once more to reach my native shores in safety and in health, I will profit by the occasion, when the bright moon is riding high over the waves of our noble Hudson, lighting up its transient summer wave with her silvery beams, and the southern zephyrs shall come wooing, as now the bland and gentle breezes of the tropic are dimpling the surface of Egypt's Nile, then to recall to my recollection scenes like the present. I fancy now that it will not be a difficult task, when contemplating through the uncertain medium and *chiaro oscuro* of the moonbeam one of our own summer landscapes, to convert its rocky defiles into the granite barrier of Nubia, cleft by the accumulated floods of Ethiopia's plains, or the rushing waters of our highland torrents into the foaming surges of Elephanta's rapids. Nor will the illusion be less

perfect when the oblique rays of the declining moon shall penetrate the dark recesses of some yawning cave, and the uncertain perspective cut by the interposing trunks of mighty oaks shall shadow forth to my awakened fancy the obscure and mystic depths of the cavernous temples of Egypt, as seen through the long vista of their advanced corridors and columns.

Should, perchance, an Indian be seen gliding past in his canoe, or stealing his way among the trees, then indeed would the illusion be complete; and the swarthy son of Shem, like the Nubian on his raft of reeds, or sauntering among the columns of Philæ's ruins, would, by adding reality to fancy, give the last finishing touch to the picture. Oh! it is "a consummation devoutly to be wished," that when the fatigues and dangers of my precarious wanderings shall all be past, and a feeling of perfect security shall once more return, the reminiscence of pleasurable emotions and gratifying excitement may cast such a halo around the memory, the brightness of which will for ever preclude from entering the precincts of its magic circle any recollections whose intrusion might tarnish its lustre, or obscure the source from whence it is radiated. To all of which methinks I hear you say amen!

Now that my face is turned towards *home*, my impatience to arrive at that sacred goal, to which the eyes of all wanderers from its holy fane are ever wont to turn, has almost neutralized every other feeling. Hasty and imperfect as have been all my preceding sketches, be not surprised if those you may in future receive should decline in interest as they decrease in volume. The moral forces which influence the wanderer about returning to the scenes of his childhood, home and friends, are as the physical attraction exerted on the spent forces of the projectile when its vertical course is arrested. With apparent reluctance he pauses; but, when once the faint receding motion is reversed, his

thoughts and his feelings outstrip the accelerated momentum of mere physical matter, and the soul is found worshipping at the shrine of its sacred *penates* long ere the "mortal coil" has done gravitating towards its native soil.

"Home, sweet home," that "*Ranz des vaches*" which gives all travellers the "*mal du pays*," shall be hereafter by me "*defendu*;" and in future it shall be *Allegro versus Penseroso*.

So *allons!* and hie with me to the rocks of *Philæ*, where, having passed the bounds of Egypt, we will together tread the northern strand of Ethiopia's border.

As soon as we arrived here, we learned from persons just from the second cataract, that, such was the low stage of the river above, it would be impossible for our large boat to get half way to it. To change from our comfortable quarters to one of the small *kanjees* of the country, with all its dirt and inconvenience, was what we could not bring ourselves to merely for the sake of seeing one or two more temples, and a rapid more insignificant than the "cataract" now in our vicinity. Besides, the weather is now growing extremely warm. We have therefore abandoned the idea of going any farther southward.

It would be impossible for me, in one short epistle, to give you all the interesting details which these localities present.

More important points are here crowded together than in any equal space in Egypt. An immense barrier of granite runs across the country at right angles with the Nile. This barrier has been burst by the river, which now rushes with great impetuosity over the inclined plane that forms its rough and uneven bed. Several large masses of rock, resisting the power of the great convulsion, now stand like impregnable castles in mid-channel, on which, from the earliest ages, cities, temples, and fortifications have been erected, completely commanding the navigation. At the season of low water there is a considerable fall, and the tor-

rent assumes a wild, foaming, and fretted appearance, which, contrasted with the dark granite rocks, makes a fine feature in the landscape. But, even at the lowest stage of the waters, a large-sized boat may be drawn up by a strong party of Nubians who are conversant with the channel. We this day saw two boats ascend the "cataract." At *high Nile* I am told there is very little appearance of cataract or rapid; yet the large body of water which comes down through this narrow pass must necessarily cause a very powerful current. At the head and foot of the rapids are situated two islands, one of which, *Elephantina*, is the southern outpost of Egypt, and the other, *Philæ*, is the northern boundary of Nubia. On the eastern shore, below the cataract, is situated the Arab city of *Assouan*, the most important point in all the country, and so considered by the oldest nations. The present town is a mean place. Beside it stand the walls, towers, and houses of the ancient city of the Saracenic fathers of the present race. It is entirely deserted, and its inhabitants have taken refuge in mud huts close under its walls. The reason they give for this great sacrifice is, that the old city was subject to so frequent and such devastating plagues; yet it stands higher, and is much more airy and convenient than their present abode. Underneath the Saracenic city is still to be found the previous Roman city, and the houses of the former communicate with the latter by steps leading down from the lower apartments. Doubtless the Roman city was built on the foundations of the previous Coptic town, itself the successor of the earlier Ethiopian outpost, wrested from the weaker children of the Egyptian valley. In all past ages this has been an important point, both in a military and commercial point of view. At the quay, beside which our vessel is now moored, what countless millions of value in the rich merchandise of India and Southern Africa have been embarked, besides the vast amount of the productions of the north on their way to

Ethiopia. Heavily laden vessels unload their precious freight above and below the rapids, which are carried round by a *portage* of several miles, while the empty boats pass through the dangerous navigation.

This morning, before the dawn of day, we were stirring, and long ere the sun rose over the eastern hills we had breakfasted and were on our way towards the boundary of Nubia. After we had cleared the huts of the present guardians of this famous pass, we skirted the ancient walls of the former city. However formidable they may have been in the age of crossbows and javelins, they would be but a sorry defence in these days, even against the light artillery of a regiment of flying dragoons. They are built entirely of sun-dried bricks. Beyond these walls, to the south, we passed through a great *necropolis*, the receptacle of all the dead of each successive city since the days of *embalming* ceased. Numbers of very old headstones were engraved with the rude and simple Kufic character of the first Arabian conquerors. Leaving behind us both the living and the dead, we entered upon the desert. On our right were the jagged pinnacles of the disrupted mountain, scattered in and along the borders of the river. On our left the unbroken chain of rock stretched away towards the east. In early times, when the rich caravans of merchandise, or the less valuable train of the humble trader, passed over this unprotected waste, they were often plundered by the wild natives of the desert, who made bold and sudden descents upon them. In order to guard against these incursions, a high wall of unburned bricks was carried along the whole eastern side of the route, much of which is now entire, and the whole line can yet be traced. No doubt this was an ample protection against any large troop of wild horsemen, with no other weapons than their spears. In these latter days, when so little treasure or valuable merchandise passes over this road, there is nothing to allure the Bedouin, or to recompense him for braving the

danger of the Turkish carbine. The road is now as safe as that from Cairo to the Pyramids. Two hours of riding brought us to a small Nubian village above the Cataract, where the river resumes the even tenour of its way. Here we found a busy little shipping port and a public market, where the rich dates of the more southern palms are brought to be exchanged for the produce of Egypt, and a few simple articles of European manufacture. How different these from the gold-dust and ivory, the gums and the spices, which, from the time of the Pharaoh to that of the Venetian, were here bartered for the rich furs of the Wolga, the cunning fabrics of Byzantium and Tyre, and the well-tempered blades of Damascus.

Much has been said by all travellers about the extraordinary and marked difference in the appearance of the inhabitants above and below the Cataracts. It is even so; the latter have so long been mingled with their Arab conquerors, that they have lost the distinctive cast of features of the ancient Egyptians, and their colour also is much lighter. But, the moment one crosses the border, one sees in the Nubian physiognomy the very counterpart of all the ancient statues, and the colour of the early race of Egypt as depicted in their tombs—a sort of reddish brown. The expression of countenance in the youthful Nubian is "*mild and bland*," and the very same the artists of the Pharaohs delighted to copy, and of which we see so many examples strewed, not only throughout the whole valley of Egypt, but gracing almost every museum in Europe.

The moment one enters Nubia, one feels as if surrounded by the peasants of the ancient Thebaid, or the fishermen of Lake Mœris, with now and then a noble son of the far South, in flowing robes and snowy turban, armed to the teeth, the very personification of a leader of cohorts in the army of Sesostris. Young *Memnons*, too, are to be met at every turn, and lovely sisters of Isis are seen coursing along the

shore, scarcely leaving the print of their fairy feet upon its sands, their hair vying with the raven's wing, their eyes outsparkling the gazelle's, and their teeth like pearls of Ormus in beds of coral. Their brilliant skin, while rivalling in colour the ruddy wood of our southern islands, is as soft and smooth as that of the most delicate of Japhet's daughters, though, like nymphs and naiads, these children of the sun, in *native beauty unadorned*, are for ever seen disporting in the palm-grove and the river, heedless of the summer solstice or the sirocco's burning breath.

From those who say that to *Egypt* the FINE ARTS owe their origin, I would beg to differ. After the mild features of the oft-repeated Memnon, and the sweet countenance of Isis or the Sphinx, all the rest is angles and distortions. The Theban or the Memphian sculptors had no eyes for curves. With *mummies* for their models, they worked by *square and rule;* and the granite and the basalt were left by their chisel as cold and inanimate as the dead Egyptian which they copied.

The poet should have said,

> "When Music, heavenly maid, was young,
> While yet in early Greece she sung,"
>
> SCULPTURE obey'd her sacred lyre:
> From the bright Promethean fire
> Her chisel drew; Heaven's sparkles rife,
> Warm'd the cold marble into life.
> Phidias then, and Praxitele,
> Hied them to the Parian dell;
> The ponderous block obey'd their nod,
> And Greece exclaim'd—a god! a god!

* * * * * * * *

I must now desist; for, should I attempt to pursue the subject of the past day's adventures to the end, before my task was finished I should be interrupted by my husband rattling at my door with his usual salutation,

> "See how brightly breaks the morn."

Therefore, sans adieu, au revoir demain.

LETTER XVI.

The Island of Philæ.—Egyptian Temples.—Their exteriors.—Beauties of the Obelisk.—Temple of Philæ.—The "Mirage."—Red Granite Quarries.—Who was that Ethiopian?—A Page from History.—Mysterious Antiquities.—Last Sight of Syene.

Assouan (Syene), ——.

ANOTHER delightful day has been occupied in wandering among the interesting scenes along the immediate border of the Cataracts, and visiting its islands. But last night we parted in Nubia; let us meet there again.

Taking a boat at the little shipping port, we crossed the eastern channel, and landed on the far-famed island of *Philæ*. According to our guide-book, this island is "situated in lat. 24°, 1′, 26″ north, is about one thousand feet in length, and four hundred feet in breadth at its widest part, being about nine hundred yards in circumference. It is of an oval form," and is composed of the red granite of Egypt, commonly called syenite.

It has an abrupt precipice on every side, with steps cut in the rock to ascend to its elevated platform, the surface of which is covered with a thin stratum of earth, no doubt carried there by direction of the priests of its temple for garden purposes. It commands a beautiful view of the rapids, islands, and indented shores towards the north, with groves of palms on every little spot of alluvial deposite. Towards the south the broad river is seen flowing placidly past its cultivated banks, until, reaching the island, its flood is divided, an unequal portion laving either side of it; the eddies leaving a rich tribute of alluvion under the northern precipice.

But the great object of attraction at Philæ is its magnifi-

cent temple, now partly in ruins. Were this a *Greek* temple, it would not be a very difficult task to give you such a description of it as would be tolerably distinct and easily understood by you. A technical description of a Grecian or Roman temple, with a few admeasurements of its area and height, renders the most magnificent and colossal works of antiquity tolerably familiar to persons of the least degree of observation. The reason is very obvious; our models are all Greek, and we study no other. But to expect you to derive any satisfaction from such description as I might give of an Egyptian temple, without a pictorial representation to refer you to, would probably be idle. Perhaps you have seen engravings from which you may have collected some ideas of the style so peculiar to Egypt. The few temples which I have yet seen resemble each other in their principal features, varying only in size and in a few details. Having been all constructed for the same religious ceremonies and *civil purposes*, the general distribution of the various parts is the same, just as we see in the great class of Norman Gothic cathedrals dedicated to the ceremonial worship of the Roman church. At present I will attempt to give you a faint idea of the *ground plan* only of one of these temples. As for details, I must become much better acquainted with them myself than I am now, before I would even venture to take you across the threshold of their mazy labyrinth. After the week we intend to pass among the monuments of Thebes, perhaps then, inflated with Sophomore vanity, I may be tempted to display to you the "little learning" which I may there acquire, and, forgetting the injunction of the poet, to "drink *deep* or taste not," I may fall into the error of all young travellers, and venture beyond my depth; the which I will endeavour to avoid for your sake as well as my own.

Without ringing the changes upon the Greek nomenclature of the various great features of an Egyptian temple,

we will leave to the architectural scholar his *Propylon*, *Dromos*, *Pronaos*, *Sekos*, &c., &c., and talk plain English.

It strikes the most superficial observer, that these vast piles and immense areas, enclosed in high and massy walls, were intended to serve the triple purpose of temple for worship, fortress, and bazar, besides affording ample domestic accommodations for a large retinue of priests and their servants. Far in advance of the principal edifice is an immense pyramidal building, flat at the top, with a bold, projecting cornice. Through the centre of this pile is a very wide and high aperture, on each side of which are still to be seen the arrangements by which the massy brazen gates were hung. This building (frequently higher than the temple itself) has staircases leading to apartments within, on each side and over the gate, and from the top there is always a fine view over the level borders of the Nile. The exterior, not being broken by windows, columns, or pilasters, leaves a fine field for the display of sculptural ornament, which is generally in low relief, representing figures of divinities, heroes, &c., from twenty to thirty feet in height, besides other inferior subjects. This is the outer "*gate*" of the temple, and of the little city and fortress. Passing through this, one enters into a large quadrangular court, with an open portico on each side, the roof composed of large flat stones, resting on the outer walls, and on a colonnade within. It is here also that the Egyptian architect and sculptor displays his art. No two columns are alike in their form, and their capitals are frequently very highly wrought. Along the ample surface of the walls, the history of ages is recorded in the mysterious hieroglyphics to which many *savans* think they have found the key.

Besides this pictorial writing, battles, sieges, naval combats, and religious processions, are represented in very low relief. These were all painted in bright colours, some of which remain as brilliant as when first put on. Crossing

this first great court, one passes through another gate smaller than the first, and enters another court, similar to the first, on the opposite end of which the grand *façade* of the temple rises. Several rows of colossal pillars support the flat roof of an open portico or vestibule, the whole width and height of the great temple. This formed a delightfully cool and shady retreat, during the summer heats, for the luxurious priesthood. At the farther end of this porch is the grand entrance to the interior of the temple, over which the universal and great national symbol, the *winged globe*, presides in sculptured majesty.

This symbol is more frequently repeated on the temples and tombs of Egypt than any other ; and the priests, after denouncing all unbelievers in the infallibility of their gods, no doubt made to them those consoling promises (in the name of their chief deity) which in after times the prophet (following up the original idea) declared towards the backsliding Jews, in the name of the Great Jehovah, using these beautiful words, "*Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.*"

After crossing the threshold of this sacred place, one is disappointed in not finding an interior proportionately grand and imposing with the great approaches to it. No immense hall, supported by columns, and lighted by windows displaying grand proportions and beautiful details of architecture, meets the expectant eye. All is darkness, obscurity, and mystery within. The interior is divided into several apartments, the inmost of which was the *sanctum sanctorum*, the "*holy of holies.*" By the light of torches, the same elaborate and mysterious designs as on the outside, are seen to cover all the walls of each apartment. The ceiling is painted in figures representing many of the symbols of their heathen worship ; often *zodiacs* and other signs, denoting the earlier and purer state of their religious creed, and its Oriental origin, before the debasing *animal worship* was in-

troduced by a crafty priesthood to darken and enslave the minds of a simple and confiding people.

Above these apartments are suites of chambers, probably dormitories of the priests. Staircases lead to the ample stone roof, where, during the splendid nights of this southern climate, the priests, no doubt, were wont to observe the motions of the heavenly bodies, and pursue their astronomical studies.

After these principal features of the Egyptian fortress-temple come the minor accessories of obelisks, colossal statues, sphinxes, &c., all but the first stiff, distorted, and unseemly. The artists of Egypt, eschewing the sweet harmony of curves, appear only to have prided themselves upon their accurate knowledge of the effect of angles. That they have succeeded in this particular all must admit, though not in their statuary. From the heavy moulded and truncated column of Egypt, and the less offensive Etruscan order, the Greeks at last arrived at the very acme of perfection in the graceful proportions of the Corinthian shaft (to say nothing of its beautiful capital). They have left nothing to be desired, and the least particle added to or deducted from its harmonious height and diameters, and beautifully swelling *entesis*, would mar what is now sublimity itself. It is even so with the cloud-piercing obelisk of the Nile. Examine it, study it as you may, you will invariably come to the conclusion, that an inch added to or subtracted from any of its diameters or its height, without altering relatively the proportions of both, would produce to the nice eye of the critic an object as unseemly as it is now chaste, *svelte*, and harmonious. The Corinthian shaft can be viewed from all points; but the obelisk, necessarily, must only be viewed at right angles with one of its planes; for the least deviation from a right line brings out a portion of the longest transverse section, which increases the visual diameter without adding anything to the height of the shaft.

Pardon my long rhapsody on the obelisk; but, verily, I am enamoured of it, perhaps because it is the only harmonious thing I have seen among all the "fine arts" of the valley of the Nile, "from the tower of Migdol even unto Syene."

The above outlines are characteristic of all the temples of Egypt, as far as I have seen or read, seldom varying in gross, however they may in detail.

The temple of Philæ is by no means of the first class as to size. The temple and its courts cover only about 450 feet by 100. The arcades around the largest court are said to have been used in ancient times for shops. It is well known that, from time immemorial among semi-barbarous nations, the exchanges of valuable merchandise have been, and still are, made under the protecting influence of some sanctuary held in common respect by all the merchant-pilgrims, who resort to it more for trade than for worship. Such at present is Mecca, and such, no doubt, were Meroe in Abyssinia, Philæ in Nubia, Thebes and Memphis, with many others in Egypt, and to such purposes were devoted for a time the courts of the great temple of Solomon, whence Christ cast out the money-changers.

* * * * * *

Leaving Philæ, we returned by the same route over the desert, without any incident worth recording, unless it may be that we were amused for a short time with that singular effect of the rays of the midday sun upon the sand, called the "*mirage*." The optical illusion thus produced, you are aware, is that which so tantalizes the thirsty traveller in the great desert as to drive him almost mad. We here saw the appearance of a beautiful lake, the rocks rising like islands, and covered with trees. Before I was made acquainted with the nature of this phenomenon, nothing could have persuaded me that I was not looking upon a real lake of clear water, agitated by the wind, with a bright sun shining upon it.

I have crowded so much of yesterday's affairs into this epistle, that I have but little space and less time for those of this day. I shall therefore be brief.

This morning we left our boat at a late hour, in order to take a nearer view of the Cataracts. We crossed and re-crossed the river close by the head of the rapids, landing on all the islands, and enjoying every new point of view. There was no place where I would hesitate to make the descent in a skiff, and none that would try the nerves as much as mine have been when shooting down the "long *saut*" of the St. Lawrence, with its clear water and rocky bottom.

The little Nubian boys endeavoured to astonish us by leaping into the rapids and diving among the breakers; but I had seen too much of the same game played before by the Indian lads in Canada to be much surprised at their exploits. We partook of a picnic under the shade of a mighty rock in the river; and then, taking to the main land again, we wended our way to the celebrated quarries whence all the beautiful red granite of Egypt was procured. We there saw an immense obelisk, more than 100 feet long by ten in diameter, lying unfinished close to the spot whence it was taken. Many other gigantic monoliths lay about in the rough state. From the marks on the stones, it appears that the same method was then in use to separate large blocks from the mountain mass, that is now practised in all countries, viz., that of drilling a great number of large and small holes alternately, and then inserting wedges. Here, where there are no apparent fissures in the rock, I do not see why a block of any dimensions could not be got out entire; the trouble would be to transport it afterward. The gentlemen procured some very curious specimens, composed of the red granite (syenite), pink porphyry, and dark gray granite, all in the same mass.

The shrill voice of Chanticleer warns me that another day is past; but, at the same time, it reminds me that an-

other day has begun. The consciousness that, ere the first streak of morning light shall tinge the horizon, I shall be shortening the first mile of my retrograde course, carries such a thrill through my heart that I am in an ecstasy of delight. Such is the serene beauty of the night, that I will not retire as usual, but will pass the remainder of it on deck, to enjoy the balmy breezes of the south, in quiet contemplation of the inspiring scenes around me.

* * * * * *

The night being past, our captain, in order not to disturb the fatigued slumberers, quietly slipped his moorings, and we were soon smoothly drifting down with the current, and, ere the sun had risen far above the rocks of Syene, they passed away for ever from my sight. From midnight until the dawn I could not sleep; but, taking my cloak, I went on deck and threw myself on one of the divans. While meditating on the mighty events which have occurred during the long vista of ages, since the canoe of the first Ethiopian shot down the Nubian cataract, and launched again on the placid bosom of Egypt's river, I inquired of myself, who was that Ethiopian, and whence came he? The torn and soiled leaf of early history retains but few fragments of clear and intelligible matter; and its "still small voice" is now only faintly heard in the distance; but the monumental page speaks volumes. Like the brazen mouths of a thousand trumpets echoing through the valley of the Nile, from the mountains of the moon to the sea, the story of long-lost nations and empires is proclaimed in loud and sounding tones, by the gigantic monumental heralds which line its shores to this day. The region where now I am is wrapped in profound darkness, while the dawn, whose morning light gilds our historical horizon, emanates from a point far below this on Egypt's plains. The pious Christians of the north have for ages made holy pilgrimages to the seat of their divine religion in the south.

The Mussulman for centuries has followed the tedious track of the sacred caravan to the tomb of his holy Prophet and the birthplace of his faith, to a point still farther south. The priests of Memphis made processions to the mother temples of the Thebaid. Processions of priests drawing against the stream a boat containing the holy ark, in which was their principal god, are described in sculptured story upon the monuments of Thebes. Where they went who can doubt, after reading the beautiful allusion to this ancient custom by the father of poetry, where he says,

> "The sire of gods and all the ethereal train,
> On the warm limits of the farthest main,
> Now mix with mortals, nor disdain to grace
> The feasts of Ethiopia's blameless race;
> Twelve days the powers indulge the genial rite,
> Returning with the twelfth revolving light."

Here history abandons us, and architecture comes to the rescue.

To Ethiopia, then, we must look for the origin of those mystic rites which taught and enjoined upon the young nations of the Theban shores to erect those stately temples that have defied the hand of time, and resisted the lever and fagot of successive destroyers. We look not in vain; for, passing by the sculptured caverns of the Nubian rocks, we find scattered over the Ethiopian plains many a stately temple, whose mysterious pictorial records tell a tale of other times, far anterior even to the remote period when their colonnades echoed to the sound of trumpets of Egypt's pilgrim priests, and the outspread wings of the deified hawk wafted back their clouds of incense from the burning gums of Saba.

Long ere Thebes had erected the first of her "hundred gates," the capital of Candace was doubtless the metropolis of an empire, equal in power, wealth, and refinement to the whole of Egypt under her greatest Pharaoh; more extensive in length and breadth of fertile soil, with a climate and

productions superior to those of the subsequent proud colony whose infant energies were nursed by her overflowing stream of population, and cradled beneath the protecting hand of her power and greatness.

I dwelt in wonder on the sublime retrospect of an empire, with a territory reaching from the Red Sea on the east to the great Sahara in the west, and stretching from the confines of Egypt to an indefinite distance south. The two gigantic arms of her sacred river, reaching in one direction towards the Indian Ocean, in the other grasping the plains of Central Africa, almost to the Atlantic, enclosed in their wide embrace immense regions of the tropical south, teeming with population, luxuriating among their groves of palms and acacias. Cities now no more, with only a temple or an obelisk left to mark their site; their palaces annihilated, and their busy population scattered, when commerce forsook the circuitous route through their dominions, and deserted by their religion and priests, who sought other and more prosperous regions in the north. I endeavoured in vain to penetrate the dark veil of mysterious antiquity, and to follow up the stream of population to where it entered the boundaries of Ethiopia. All beyond was conjecture. Fatigued with fruitless efforts to make head against the uncertain current, overhung with midnight darkness, I preferred to start at once from its source, and permit myself to be carried down its devious tide, until I should emerge from the mists which envelop its early career. Among the mountains which overhang the plains of Shinar, I found that source. Descending their rivers, and not choosing to linger long about the infant capital of Ninus, I floated down to the maturer Babylon, where I found the overflowing population of the Tigris and Euphrates concentrating, and preparing for migration towards the south. The priest-leaders of each swarming colony had made their last sacrifice upon the altars of Belus, received the blessing of its venerable pontiff, and taken from

its archives copies of their sacred books. Bands of pioneers of the military order of Nimrod preceded each division of the advancing host, while a chosen phalanx of braves defended the ark of the sacred fire, borne upon the shoulders of the most holy of their priests. Onward marched the mighty host, who were to people in their course the yet uninhabited regions of the distant south. The plains of the great river needed not their aid; they therefore reached the interior sea in one unbroken column. Here I saw the torrent of population divide; one portion coasting the eastern shore until they were arrested by the great desert of Gedrosia: here changing front, they skirted its northern border, with their faces towards the rising sun. Accompanying them in their progress, I saw them embark upon the waters of the Indus and the mighty Ganges, in search of those regions where the God of day pours down his vertical streams of holy fire upon the rich plains of the tropics. There I left them, to return to the other division of the host. I found that it had so far preceded me, that, ere I overtook it, it had overspread the delightful valleys of Hadramaut, and appropriated all the spicy groves of Yemen. Here the weary wanderers lingered for a considerable time, though not like the children of Israel of after times, in a desert, yet as anxiously looking forward to a promised land, while recruiting their forces and gathering new strength for their enterprises. They cultivated the soil and built cities, on whose foundations, at this present day, rise the domes and minarets of Saana and Mocha. They learned also to build ships, and navigated the shores of the Red Sea, which they found desert and unsuited to their purpose. A band of adventurers, crossing the narrow strait, landed on the opposite strand, when the towers of Azab were seen to rise and cast their lengthened shadows over the waters of its bay. Long ere the palaces of the rival port of Adule sprang into existence, the new colony had pushed its explorers across the mount-

ain barrier before them. On their return to their friends, their unanimous report spoke more of the "grapes" and "pomegranates," than of the "giants" of the countries they had visited.

It was Ethiopia's noble rivers, and fertile, uninhabited plains which they had seen. The cities of our western world rose not more rapidly, after the landing of the pilgrim fathers upon its shores, than did those of Ethiopia after I saw the priests of Belus lead their devoted followers across the strait, and through the mountain defiles into the plains beyond. The temples of Axum and Meroe soon reared their proud heads, and the slender shaft of the granite obelisk, typical of the holy flame on the altars within, was seen to point upward towards the pure source of the sacred fire. By what gradations this simple and beautiful mythe descended into the dark pit of animal worship into which the nation was afterward plunged, I know not; but certain it is, that their priests retained the knowledge of their early Chaldean rites unto the latest days of heathen Egypt, as the obelisks and winged globes of the latter country attest to this day.

Meroe, like her who, robed in scarlet, now sits beside the yellow Tiber, was the fruitful mother of a long category of rites and ceremonies, tending only to her own aggrandizement and to the profit of her priests, while they debased and enslaved the minds of "Ethiopia's blameless race." Like her of the present time, she instructed her pontiff to send priestly missions to the farthest corner of the then known world. I saw them descend the Nubian valley, scoop out its mountain rock, and lavish upon it in sculptured profusion the beastly devices of their craft. In the inmost recesses of these cavern temples they performed their mysterious rites under the shadow of midnight obscurity; they "loved darkness rather than light, for their deeds were evil." Even in the great Oasis of the desert the tem-

ple of Ammon still frowns over the waste and lords it over the green valley. On Philæ's rock the hawk of Meroe was perched, whence I saw her numerous and prolific brood migrate to the plains of Egypt.

The approach of day, and the consequent stir upon deck, drove home all my errant fancies, when I rose from my couch to snuff the morning air and take leave of Syene.

When the last pinnacle of rock was receding from our sight, my companions made their appearance on deck, not a little disappointed that I had stolen a march upon them during their morning sleep. I endeavoured to propitiate them with these jingling lines, suggested by the first dawn which broke upon my homeward path.

Hail! friends, behold the god of day o'er yon mountain rise,
Towards whose meridian path, for months, our longing eyes
Have been directed.
His beams are now behind us; to the cold north afar,
May our uncertain steps, guided by the Polar star,
Be now protected.

To Tartary's desert plains, from fertile Gallic lands,
From Norway's rocky coasts to Nubia's burning sands,
We've wander'd.
O'er Britain's Druid stones, Scythia's mounds on eastern plains,
Odin's temples in the North, o'er Memnon's cavern'd fanes,
We've ponder'd.

The Gaul, Goth, and Saxon, Scandinavian and Hun,
Greek, Turcoman, and Arab, and Nubia's swarthy son,
We've confronted.
Siberian snows, with polar frosts, the ice-bound river,
The tropic's scorching breath, *mirage's* deceitful quiver,
We've encounter'd.

Plague, pestilence, and fever, the desert's moving sand,
The barbarous bucanier, the bandit's bloody hand,*
If they should come;
Or treacherous shoal, the iron-bound coast, the sunken rock,
The mountain wave, rude Boreas, Levanter, or Siroc,
God's will be done.

* Pirates are said now to be infesting the Archipelago, and robbers the mountain passes of Greece.

Health! bestow on us strength, ambition, perseverance,
Ardour, and courage to resist all interference;
Hope! thou "sheet anchor to the soul," do thou sustain us
Providence! defend, protect, and to the end maintain us.

Committing my future destinies into the hands of Him who has carried me thus far in safety, I once more bid you an affectionate farewell.

LETTER XVII.

Splendour of Thebes.—The Theban Plain.—A Survey of the Ground.—Extraordinary Ruin.—The Memnonium.—Medinat Abu.—The Grand Temple.—Monstrosities of Egyptian Worship.

Thebes, ——.

For seven days past, from the early dawn to the setting sun, have I been wandering over this vast field of gigantic ruins. As many evenings I have taken up my pen to give you a sketch of the day's adventures, and each time I have laid it down again in despair.

You remember that Mohammed, seated on his milk-white *Alborak*, one night went coursing through the heavens, and when he had attained to the seventh, there saw an angel "who had seventy thousand heads, in every head seventy thousand mouths, in every mouth seventy thousand tongues, in every tongue seventy thousand voices." Now if each of those voices had seventy thousand trumpets, all joining in one loud accord, and proclaiming the greatness, wealth, and power of "the world's great empress on the Egyptian plain," the combined effort would be as the gentle zephyr sighing through the strings of the harp, when compared to the astounding voice of the monumental wonders of Thebes.

"Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine

Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury."

Speaking of these latter, Belzoni says, "The most sublime conceptions that can be derived from the most magnificent specimens of our present architecture, would fall very far short of these ruins; for such is the difference, not only in magnitude, but in form, proportion, and construction, that even the pencil can convey but a faint idea of the whole. It appeared to me like entering a city of giants, who, after a long conflict, had been all destroyed, leaving the ruins of their various temples as the only proofs of their existence."

When in Paris I often pored over the splendid illustrations of Napoleon's great work on Egypt, and, by the aid of the text, I flattered myself that I had acquired some idea of the wonders therein described. I had already seen several insulated temples, both below and above Thebes; but it was not until I stood in the midst of Carnac's city of ruins that I felt the full force of Denon's remarks when speaking of the temple of Dendera.

"I wish that I could here transfuse into the soul of my reader the sensations which I experienced. I was too much lost in astonishment to be capable of cool judgment." "How many ages of creative ingenuity were requisite to bring a nation to such a degree of perfection and sublimity in the arts." "What unceasing power, what riches, what abundance, what superfluity of means, must a government possess, which could erect such an edifice, and find within itself artists capable of conceiving and executing the design of decorating and enriching it with everything that speaks to the eye and the understanding! Never did the labour of man show me the human race in such a splendid point of view."

A traveller who subsequently visited Thebes says of Carnac, "It was long after I reached my tent ere I recov-

ered from the bewilderment into which the view of these stupendous ruins had thrown me. No one who has not seen them can understand the awe and admiration they excite in unscientific beholders. When I compare the descriptions of Denon and Hamilton, I find them essentially correct, yet without giving me any adequate idea of the glorious reality. They fail in describing what has never been, and never can be, described. No words can impart a perception of the profusion of pillars, standing, prostrate, inclining against each other, broken and whole. Stones of a gigantic size propped up by pillars, and pillars resting upon stones, which appear ready to crush the gazer under their sudden fall."

I have brought these witnesses into court (who, doubtless, are quite familiar to you) to prove the truth of my first assertion, and also, from their testimony, to frame an excuse for not entering into as much detail as you might desire on this interesting subject.

After the *holy city* in Palestine, no one spot on the earth have I so long desired to behold as the one from which I am now addressing you; and though I have been a whole week studying the grand features of its proud temples, I feel at present as if I had dreamingly been transported through some land of fable, and all that I acquired concerning them is now vanished into thin air.

When the poet said,

"Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring,"

he little dreamed "in his philosophy" how deep a draught would be required from this copious fountain of knowledge to satisfy even the first cravings of burning thirst in those who approach its overflowing streams.

Were old Nilus's urn poured over the arid surface of the Libyan desert, its sands would not be more insatiate than the ever-increasing thirst of those whose lips once touch the brim of this antique vase of Egyptian lore.

The first day we passed principally on horseback, galloping from one monument to another, and scouring the plain of western Thebes from north to south and from east to west, in order to get a correct idea of the *locale*. We were too much excited by the idea that we were actually riding over the very ground once covered by the greatest and one of the most ancient cities of the world, to stop and observe even superficially any one of the multitude of interesting objects which presented themselves on every hand to our astonished view.

We returned at evening to our boat, fatigued both in body and mind. We could neither read nor write, and our communications were rather a string of ejaculations and exclamations than a regular and satisfactory conversation. Retiring early, we were the better enabled to sustain the labours of the succeeding day, which we employed in examining leisurely each temple and other monuments of the western or elder Thebes. Taking our books with us, we passed several hours in the nearest temples; our servants prepared our midday lunch in the shade of some mighty propylon, after which the gentlemen regaled themselves with their *chibouck*, while I employed myself in taking hasty notes, that should one day serve to recall to my mind details which succeeding objects might efface for ever from my memory.

Two other days we passed among the eternal monuments of Diospolis, on the east side of the river; another at the tombs of the kings, and this day we have taken our last leave of each great temple in succession.

I will not lay myself open to the charge of presumption by entering upon a regular description of the least of these wonderful monuments; but, with your approbation, we will mount each a fleet steed, and together course round the Theban plain, as I did on the first day of our arrival here. For a moment we will rein up in front of each

temple, and finally taking the wide circuit of Carnac's walls, we will return to our boat and bid adieu to the city of *Ammon* for ever. We will now retire for the night, before which I will direct Ali to "saddle white Surry for the field to-morrow." * * * * * * * * *

Before we put foot in stirrup, ascend with me yon height, and let us take a view of the course over which our fleet chargers are about to hurry us.

Turn now round and face the south. On our left, the turgid stream of Ethiopia almost laves the foot of the Libyan rocks on which we stand, and divides them from the Arabian chain not far distant, leaving but a brief span of alluvial soil ere the northern barrier of the Theban plain again rears its russet head. Behold, far away to the left, the brilliant coruscations that tinge with amber and gold the wavy sky-line of Thebes's eastern wall of rock. While I am now speaking, see how Apollo's coursers mount the sky, the burning wheels of his chariot just overtopping the Arabian hills. Mark how his beams have tipped with flame yon tall obelisk of Luxor, and shed a faint light upon the uncertain group of columns below. See! another horizontal ray has just shot across the stream, and touched the towering head of the gigantic Memnon, far away over the plain of western Thebes. If no sound reaches our ears from the vocal statue, perhaps it is in the two leagues of distance dispersed. Behold! the whole circular frame of yellow rock is gilded by the rising sun, while the picture it confines is yet but faintly seen through the gray shadows of the morning.

What need had Thebes of a "hundred gates?" Do you not see that, from the spot where we now stand, the eternal hills, parting at the river, sweep round with two gigantic curves, and approach each other again in the south? This zone of rock bounds the largest plain of ancient Egypt, and is said to measure, in all its diameters, over three leagues. The river, entering it at the south, divides it unequally, and,

passing out again at the north, leaves the scantier proportion of plain on the west.

The sun has now fully risen, and, ere those western hills cast their dark shadows over the Memnonium, we must have made the whole circuit of the plain, in order to behold his declining rays darting through the portals of Carnac's vast propylon, and illuminating her hundred-columned hall.

The first part of our road lies along the extremity of the rocky flat which borders the whole northern and western sides of the plain, just where the last ripple of the Nile's highest wave leaves its annual tribute at the threshold of the oldest temples.

In yonder palm grove, the beautiful temple of *Gornou* is so obstructed by accumulated mounds of rubbish that we cannot penetrate its courts. We will, therefore, ride on another mile towards the west. You see that broad avenue, which appears to be a continuation of this same road, and is lined on either side with fragments of sphinxes. That is the ancient way to the tombs of the Theban kings, the present entrance to which is some miles round in the Libyan mountains. As we can visit those by torchlight when the day is done, let us now follow our road, which here turns to the south.

From the avenue we have just left, a few minutes only will serve us to reach the first great temple.

Heed not the thousand fragments which lie on either hand, but wheel round in front of the towering pile of ruins before us. Approach not too near, lest its disjointed members topple over on our heads, and bury us beneath the remains of the MEMNONIUM.

This singular mass of ruin, which stands in advance of the temple, was once the great propylon or eastern gate, and presents, perhaps, the most extraordinary appearance of any ruin in the world. An earthquake, and not the hand of man, was the agent which produced this curious spectacle. This

mass of ruin is, at its base, still 230 feet long, although traces of a much greater extent are visible. When the earthquake has been at work upon the perpendicular walls of other temples in Egypt, or temples, churches, and other monuments in other parts of the world, it has either thrown down the whole, or a part of such walls, or made great rents in them. The parts not overthrown or affected by the rents remain always entire; but you will perceive that in this instance the broad base, pyramidal elevation, and massy materials have resisted the vibrating force which, in any other case, would have produced a total destruction. The peculiarity of this case is, that scarcely a single one of the gigantic stones of which this propylon is composed, now remains in its original position. Some of them, near the base, project out many inches beyond the original line, just as if the building was hollow (which it is not at that particular part), and some mighty force had been exerted from within to force out that particular stone. Another stone recedes inward from the line quite as much as the other projects. Every one of the original nicely fitted joints, at the end of each stone in the mass, is opened from one to three inches, while at the top, where the vibration, which shook the whole fabric, was the greatest, the stones are thrown into a confused heap, like a loose pile of bricks. The cause of this singular effect is very obvious. No cement was used in the construction of the edifice; the architect depended on the immense weight of each integral member to bind the whole together. Had cement, like that used in the great pyramids of Memphis, been employed in this pyramidal structure, not any earthquake that Egypt ever experienced could have loosened a joint. Had the immense stones of the great pyramids been laid up without cement, the same earthquake that shook this propylon, and overthrew those of Carnac, would probably have deprived them of half their height, while not a single stone of them has been moved an inch

by the great convulsion which appears to have been general throughout Egypt.

Let us pass round this gate, and wander among the sad remains of what was once the beautiful and magnificent Memnonium. The power that could only shake the mountain of stone in front, has totally overthrown the walls which once connected it with the body of the temple, and formed the succession of courts, like those I described to you at Philæ. Even the outer walls of the temple itself are fallen, besides two thirds of its one hundred and sixty columns. You ask, where are the dismembered columns and the fragments of its walls? From the hollow and deserted sanctuary, echo answers, where? Go ask Memphis, Sais, and Alexandria; the same melancholy response will be heard. The polished granite which once lined its doorways and supported its altars, seek, and ye shall find it among the ruins of the imperial palaces of Byzantium and the golden house of Nero in Rome. The statues, which have been torn from their bases, now line the corridors of the Vatican and the Louvre.

This vast temple and its six great courts, as you will perceive, had no need of artificial pavement, for they are based upon the eternal rock of the Libyan mountain. Were it not for the state of the ruined propylon we first examined, which no power of man, even by the aid of gunpowder, could have given its present peculiar appearance, one might almost doubt the received theory of earthquake agency here. For it is almost incredible that this rocky foundation of Libya could be thus shaken. We have traced the whole outer circumference of this temple and its courts, and find them to have once covered an area of two hundred feet by six hundred, nearly twice the size of the great temple at Philæ.

Turn round the angle of that fragment of wall, and behold the prostrate Memnon! Before it was dashed to pieces, this was, perhaps, the greatest monolith ever transported by man to any distance from its native quarry. It is from the

red granite mountain of Syene. On my second visit to this spot, the statue was measured, and found to correspond with the incredible dimensions I had formerly read. The breadth between the shoulders is twenty-six feet. The circumference of the chest 54 feet, and the arm, from the shoulder to the elbow, 12 feet. The statue weighs 900 tons! The point of one foot, which lies yonder on the ground, is much more gigantic than a mere casual observation indicates. I was one of five persons who stood shoulder to shoulder, on the tip end of as many toes as belong to the fragment.

When sitting on its enormous pedestal of the same red granite, it must have been the most imposing object of the kind in Egypt. Had it stood upright, the famous brazen Colossus of Rhodes would have been much less wonderful; the latter being hollow, and formed of numerous plates, while the Memnon is of solid stone, and, if the statue were in an erect position, would be over eighty feet high above the pedestal. No earthquake could have thrown it from its sitting posture. Force has been evidently used, as the marks of the chisel and wedges indicate around the edges of each fracture. Who it was that attempted to destroy this wonderful work is not now known. Of the thousand lesser fragments which surround the base, we appropriated several of about one cubic foot each, and they are now on board our boat.

Before we leave this temple, observe that immense quadrangle which encloses the field of ruins. Under the gray rubbish you will find long *arched* galleries, side by side, throughout the whole extent of the mound. The arches are composed of unburned bricks, and are of *Roman* origin, built when this temple was perhaps a garrison for the troops of Cæsar. We have no time to dwell upon the imperfect sculpture of its storied walls, therefore take now your last look at dismembered Memnon, and then we will resume our southern route along the edge of the plain, with the *thousand*

feet of Theba's wall towering above our heads. Those immense square piles of unused bricks were left by the Roman builders, when the imperial city called in her outposts to defend her own walls against invaders. Those excavations on our left have lately brought to light the ruined foundation of the earlier Memnonium, destroyed by Cambyses, when not a temple of Thebes was left standing after the departure of the Persian invader. The materials of this and other primitive temples are everywhere to be seen, with their fine sculpture worked into the body of the walls of the more recent monuments.

Those chambers cut in the rocky face of the mountain, with their long piazzas and columns, could not have been tombs, but were doubtless residences of the wealthy Thebans. The interior is represented to enjoy an equal temperature throughout all seasons, and the meridian sun or the midnight chill of the plain below is never felt within them. It is scarcely twenty minutes since we left the Memnonium, and here we are in front of the great propylon, whose majestic gateway opens upon the outer court of the temple of Medinat Abu. Having passed through several courts, we are now in an area which presents a very unusual appearance for an Egyptian temple ; and well it may, for those rude columns which encumber it once supported the roof of a *Christian church.* The Coptic descendants of those Egyptians who assembled round that ruined altar, and there in meekness and humility joined their holy pastor in morning and evening devotions, still worship the true and living God in distant and obscure retreats, more in unison with their present degraded political state and servile dependance upon their Moslem lord.

Beyond this court you see a small temple, which we will leave on our right, and pass over the south wall of this court by means of the accumulated rubbish which covers it. We are now in the second story of a palace, perhaps once the

residence of those sovereigns who were always under the tutelage of the priesthood. Its ruined state presents nothing remarkable, except that its architecture differs materially from the temple style of building, being less massive. Through its lower story is the passage to the Grand Temple, which we will next visit.

The rubbish which encumbers the first great court consists of the dilapidated huts of the degraded Arabs, who infest some of the most perfect temples of Egypt, and bury them under the ruins of successive series of mud-built villages. The propylon, which rears its proud head far above the temple, is one hundred and seventy-five feet long. Having passed through its gateway, we are now in another court one hundred and twenty feet square, with a piazza on each side; in front of us is a second propylon. Let us pass through this, and in the next great court we will find the ruins of another Christian church. The interior of the great temple is so encumbered with mud and rubbish, that we will not now attempt to explore the mysterious chambers contained in the stupendous fabric, which measures five hundred feet by one hundred and fifty. Its height, you will perceive, cannot be ascertained, as the present surface of the ground is within a few feet of the roof. If any obelisks or colossal statues ever graced these courts (of which there can be no doubt), they have either been removed, or lie buried deep under the sand. It would require a week to examine even what remains above ground of the pictorial history of battles, sieges, triumphs, and processions, civil, military, and religious, all in bas-relief of extravagant dimensions. A month would not suffice to scan the *miles* of hieroglyphic lines which adorn the corridors, piazzas, and columns of the various outer courts. Cast your eyes round, and behold on every side the divinities of Thebes, in the form of almost every beast, reptile, and insect that is to be found upon the earth, in the air, or in the water, and then form your own

opinion of what must have been the horrible and degrading worship practised in the dark chambers of yon buried temple.

Listen to the muse of Ovid:

"Where she sings,
How the gods fled to Egypt's slimy soil,
And hid their heads beneath the banks of Nile;
How Typhon from the conquer'd skies pursued
Their routed godheads to the seven-mouth'd flood:
Forced every god, his fury to escape,
Some beastly form to take, or earthly shape.
Jove (so she sung) was changed into a ram,
From whence the horns of Libyan Ammon came:
Bacchus a goat; Apollo was a crow;
Phœbe a cat; the wife of Jove a cow,
Whose hue was whiter than the falling snow;
Mercury to a nasty ibis turn'd,
The change obscene, afraid of Typhon mourn'd:
While Venus from a fish protection craves,
And once more plunges in her native waves."

Juvenal, after he had visited these temples eighteen hundred years ago, and returned to Rome, thus alludes to the monstrosities of Egyptian worship:

"Who knows not that infatuate Egypt finds
Gods to adore in brutes of basest kinds?
This at the crocodile's resentment quakes,
While that adores the ibis gorged with snakes!
And where the radiant beam of morning rings
On shatter'd Memnon's still harmonious strings,
And Thebes to ruin all her gates resigns.
Of huge baboon the golden image shines!
To mongrel curs, infatuate cities bow,
And cats and fishes share the frequent vow!
There leeks are sacred, there, 'tis crime, in sooth,
To wound an onion with unholy tooth;
Ye pious nations, in whose gardens rise
A constant crop of earth-sprung deities,
Nor sheep, nor kid to slaughter ye consign,
Meekly content on human flesh to dine!"

That colossal hero, with his chariots, horses, armies, navies, and captured cities, is Osiris, whose imperishable his-

tory thus occupies the whole surface of the high walls, which are one mile in circuit.

These we must omit, for the intense heat of the meridian sun warns me that it is time for our noontide *siesta*.

We will profit by the cool shade of yonder tomb, and there repose for a couple of hours.

Selim, brush away those mummies and spread our carpets.

LETTER XVIII.

The Musical Memnon.—The lost City.—Crocodiles of the Nile.—Temple of Luxor.—View from the Propylon.—An Avenue of Sphinxes.—Temple of Carnac.—Its Architectural Greatness.—Egyptian Pantheon.—The Hall of Columns.—Iron known to the ancient Egyptians.—A Field of Desolation.

Thebes, ——.

MOUNT again thy Pegasus, and hie with me across the Theban plain, to where the towers of proud Diospolis rear their mighty heads beyond the eastern bank of Nile.

First, we will retrace our steps upon the rocky flat to where the foundations of the elder Memnonium lie uncovered; and thence proceed along the broad avenue, now lined with broken statues, which once was the *via sacra* from Luxor to the fane of Memnon. Hold! what are those two gigantic masses of rock directly in front of us towards the east? Spur on, and in five minutes you will find yourself where

"Shatter'd Memnon's still harmonious strings"

are lifted high in air.

Behold, we are now at the base of these twin statues, whose lofty heads rise fifty feet above the soil. You will perceive that the material of which they are composed is neither the red granite of Syene, nor the common sandstone

of the Nile, but a sort of nondescript quartzy substance from the neighbouring mountains. It would now probably be beyond the power of man to move such immense masses of rock any great distance from the quarry; they weigh each seven hundred tons! The base on which each of them is seated measures thirty feet in length, eighteen feet in breadth, and eight feet thick; each one solid mass.

Who can say how many thousand years these majestic gods of Egypt have been seated on their everlasting thrones? It is now thirty-one centuries since Sesostris and his hosts defiled through this outer barrier of the Memnonium on their way to Persia and India. Twenty-five centennial suns have cast the shadows of these statues towards the western desert, since the armies of the Persian Cambyses heard the last *révéillé* from the musical mouth of Memnon, ere they perished in the Libyan sands. Exasperated by the loss of his army, against the horns of Ammon of the Oasis, the Persian conqueror vented his rage upon the early monuments of Thebes. Yet these giant statues resisted the power of the destroyer, and, for ages after, the matin songs of the Memnon were daily listened to by wondering multitudes. Although his harp is broken, and his Æolian airs have long been hushed, yet the breezes that now sigh through his rent bosom carry a music to the soul, which, to be appreciated, must needs be heard.

The most generally received opinion respecting the manner in which the musical sounds from the Memnon were produced, is, that they proceeded from an accidental or natural fissure in the stone in the upper part of the body.

The cold air of the night entering into the cavity, became rarefied and expanded by the first rays of the rising sun, and, on its issuing from a small aperture, a slight sound was heard; as the sun's power became stronger and the stone more heated, the air rushed out with greater violence, producing a sound at the end of the first hour like that of a trumpet.

After the upper part of this statue was broken and repaired with masonry, the priests, in order to keep up the reputation of their deity, arranged some artificial apparatus, by which he was enabled to perform his daily orisons to the Supreme God of the Universe. The many names engraved upon the pedestal are those of Greek and Roman travellers, who attest that they heard the Memnon's tones. *Cecelia* (Cecelia Metella?), leaving the forum and gardens of Rome, wandered to the distant Thebaid, and left her sign manual upon this stone. *Julia*, too, perhaps the daughter of Diomed, here recorded her visit to the shrine of the musical god.

Do you not feel that there is some irresistible power that rivets you to this spot? By what magic spell are we bound? Can it be that the daughters of Oceanus and Amphitrite, whom Orpheus turned into stone, are here personified? If so, their shells are mute; then, whence the enchantment? But if, then, we have no fear of being devoured ourselves, we are making sad work with our precious time, when we have yet so much to do ere the sun shall set on Carnac. Let us mount and be off.

Stay one moment; turn and take a farewell glance at the twin statues. Adieu! Shamy and Damy; when another cycle of three thousand years shall have been accomplished, if the creed of the gods you represent be true, I shall then pay you another visit. May I then find you as you once were, guarding

"The world's great empress on the Egyptian plain,"

reinstated in all her pristine glory and magnificence, her streets once more thronged with Indians, Greeks, and Persians, hand in hand with our Romans of the farthest West. May I find all these proud temples restored; their numerous and magnificent priesthood, having passed through the ordeal of their countless transmigrations, become absolved from their former sins; and, thus regenerated, purified, may

their voices be lifted up in praise of the true and only God. May Memnon's voice then be heard again, chanting the sweet music of the spheres; and while each morning he salutes the God of Day, may he proclaim, in loud and sounding tones, the power and omnipotence of the great Creator of all the heavenly hosts. And when the last trump shall sound, calling all men to judgment, may the countless millions buried under yonder hills, who bowed the knee to the earthly Ammon, be here far outnumbered by Egypt's succeeding generations of disciples of the Lamb of God.

Turn now to the east. The broad plain which lies between us and the river was once covered with palaces and streets of the greatest city of antiquity. Where are they now? You see the waving corn spread like a sea before us. Where beautiful fountains once threw their spray high in air, to toy with the many-hued Iris, are now only to be seen the muddy rivulets of irrigation, trailing their serpentine forms through the luxuriant vegetation like huge boas in the jungles of India.

The surface of the ground over which we are now coursing, without the least obstacle to obstruct our path, is thirty feet above the pavements of Thebes, and it has been piled up by the annual overflowing of the Nile for ages since the ancient mounds, which excluded it from the populous city, were broken down, and the waters left to complete the work of desolation and oblivion.

We cannot hope that the curious antiquary or the interested speculator will ever attempt to lay bare any part of the immense area of city which lies so deeply buried. Although the superincumbent mass of earth is as light and as easily removed as the ashes which cover the streets and houses of Pompeii, yet it is by no means certain, and, perhaps, scarcely probable, that anything of the least value has been suffered to remain on the site of this ruined city. But were it possible to denude a portion of it, without too

much expense, much might be learned of the form and style of private edifices, from their foundations and overturned walls. It is my opinion, however, that the private dwellings were of wood, or some equally frail texture, as those in India and China are represented to be, and that the great architectural energies and science of the nation were lavished upon their religious temples. To this they were, of course, instigated and stimulated by the crafty and powerful hierarchy, who ruled them at times with a rod of iron, and at others led them by the "cords of love." Why are we halting here, to muse and speculate upon what may or may not be under these grain-fields? Spur on to the river!

You perceive that, as we approach its banks, there is a gradual rise in the plain. You cannot perceive it by the ordinary means of observation, for it is too gradual and imperceptible; but take notice of those rills of Nile water, coming with considerable velocity directly towards us, and at right angles with the river. They proceed from small reservoirs on the river bank, which are kept overflowing all day long by the peasants, who raise the water from the river in various curious though simple ways, which you will soon behold.

I perceive that Ali has our skiff ready to convey us across the stream, and, if he has obeyed orders, has horses prepared for us on the opposite bank. Do you see that black speck just above the water, near the farther shore? It is a crocodile watching us; and, the moment we embark, you will see him draw under water the *one eye*, which is the last thing he keeps above the surface.

On yonder sandbank is another huge leviathan, at full length, sunning himself. He, too, will slide off the moment he perceives us. I have frequently seen a dozen at a time, quite near to us, as we suddenly rounded a turn in the river, came unexpectedly upon, and caught them napping. Some of them were twenty-five feet in length. The gen-

tlemen frequently shot at them, but the balls glanced off from their coat of mail as if they had been projected against a cuirass of Milan steel.

The current, you see, is not rapid, as the river is now getting quite low. Although the water appears thick, yet, when taken up in a glass, it is quite transparent, and deposites very little extraneous matter; much less, probably, than at the time of the great flood, when the rush of waters brings down the rich alluvion of the overflowing lakes of southwestern Africa.

I have purposely kept your attention fixed upon the water, in order to manage a surprise for you. Look up, and behold the towering walls of *Luxor* above your head, with its aspiring obelisk, ready in anger to dart at the sun for not having annihilated, at a stroke, the barbarous Gaul who so lately robbed it of its mate.*

We are now arrived at the water-steps of the temple, by which devotees used to ascend to worship at the shrine within.

The river front is not as imposing as the opposite one which faces the north. Before we land I will call your attention to the sudden turn in the river at this point, by which it runs nearly parallel with the south façade of the temple. We will ascend the steps and make a *detour*, in order to get a front view of the great north entrance of Luxor, where it is to be seen to the best advantage.

If we had time at this moment, I would make a morning call, and introduce you to an English lady, who, with her husband, arrived here yesterday overland from India, and is at present living in yonder tent, delightfully pitched under the shade of some palm-trees. But they will be our guests at dinner this evening, when you shall see them. So *allons*, to our work.

* The French, by permission of the pacha, have taken one of these beautiful obelisks to Paris, where I saw it lying on the quay.

Step, now, from behind that mud hut, and behold the sublime entrance to a sublimer temple. That propylon is two hundred feet wide at its apparent base. (The real base is thirty feet below the present level of the soil.) On one side is the widowed obelisk, mourning for its lost companion. May the Briton have more good taste than the Gaul, and leave it here, under its own bright skies, where the sun, of which it is a type, never for a day withdraws from it the light of his countenance. Fancy it now standing among the dripping and moss-covered trees of St. James's Park, and, after two years' smoking, coated with an inch of coal soot! It would then be under the ban of Typhon with a vengeance! That row of enormous heads and shoulders, which you see twenty feet above the soil, belongs to as many huge statues of red granite, buried thirty feet in the earth. We will pass through the propylon only, in order to see a succession of courts very similar to those of the Memnonium, a temple in very little better preservation than the latter, and much less perfect than that of Medinat Abu.

The first court is one hundred and sixty feet broad by three hundred feet long, surrounded with a portico of double columns. Beyond is a forest of columns, twelve feet in diameter by forty high, each surmounted by a beautiful capital, resembling the sacred lotus flower. The first interior apartment of the temple is one hundred and forty feet by one hundred and sixty. To this succeed several other equally magnificent halls, all adorned with clusters of highly ornamented columns, which support the heavy stone roof. But the whole is encumbered with the mud huts of the present Egyptian peasants, whose filth is scarcely a less profanation of these splendid ruins than were formerly the unholy rites herein practised by a civilized people. The whole length of the temple and its advanced courts, which were once roofed in, is eight hundred feet!

From the top of the propylon is a superb view. First,

you have the whole field of ruins at one glance; then to the south, a long reach of river prospect; to the west, the temples of old Thebes; to the east, the broad plain to the Arabian mountains; and to the north, the eye rests on the sublime wonders of Carnac, two miles distant.

If the ascent to the top of this gateway was difficult, you will find the descent much more so, for the earthquake has not spared this pile more than any of the rest. The staircase is out of joint in so many places, that wide chasms are to be leaped, and one false step would be instant death.

We are now clear of the vile parasite mud huts, which cling so closely to the noble pile of ruins, and are once more in the open champaign country.

From the point where we now are the river slightly inclines to the west of north, while the road to Carnac diverges as much to the east, by which the temples there are more than a mile from the river.

Here, near the river bank, the present surface of the soil is more than thirty feet above its ancient level, while at Carnac the accumulation has not been so great.

Below where we are now riding there is a double row of colossal sphinxes, lining the ancient avenue which connected Carnac with Luxor. This avenue is two miles long. We shall soon see indications of these sphinxes; and, farther on, the avenue has been entirely excavated, and is found to be sixty-three feet wide, and the sphinxes twelve feet apart, so that there are (above and below ground) two thousand of these colossi! What a magnificent perspective this must have been, and how gloriously terminated at either end. The excavations on either side of us are where the curious have sought and found the continuation of the chain of sphinxes. The high mounds are where probably chapels and altars have stood on both sides the sacred way. We are now arrived at the excavated part of the avenue. You see the sphinxes are of soft sandstone, and not of the red

granite of Syene; for even the Herculean labours of the ancient Egyptians could scarcely have accomplished such a task.

These sphinxes are formed of the lion's body and ram's head, with the figure of some divinity as large as life, standing between the fore paws of each couchant beast.

That continuous mound which you see stretching away to the east and west is the ancient wall of sun-dried bricks forming the sacred enclosure, in the midst of which stand the awful ruins of Carnac's holy fane. We must here dismount, for it would be profanation in us to approach these mysterious ruins otherwise than on foot.

The grand propylon before us is the southern entrance to the great court of Carnac. You have now to enjoy the greatest treat the world can afford in the way of ruins. If you enter that gate as I did, such will be your surprise that you will be riveted to the spot without the power of advancing any farther for an hour. As I am your *cicerone*, you must not only be guided by my advice, but you must obey my commands. It is my intention to transport you suddenly into the centre of the great area of ruin, in order that you may at once attain the only point of view where the whole may be seen to advantage. There, without stirring from the spot, you may, by simply turning round to every side, behold all the wonders of this most extraordinary locality. Therefore I will draw your shawl over your eyes while I conduct you thither; but be prepared for a surprise when you shall be unhooded, and string your nerves to their utmost degree of tension. You need not fear that any of those tottering walls would reach you should they fall; for, such is the immense diameter of the court, that, should another earthquake occur while you are there, no harm could happen to you, even though every one of the immense fabrics were overthrown at once.

There! be seated on the capital of this overthrown col-

umn. I will now remove the veil from your eyes, and leave you for half an hour to your own reflections. None can tolerate the least intrusion at such a moment of intense excitement, when the rapt soul is absorbed in contemplating the most sublime conceptions and wonderful executions of that creature whom God made after his own image.

I leave you with this caution. Divest your mind of all association with the vulgar name of *Carnac*, and of the heathen uses to which these temples were profaned. Elevate the mind to the point where an enlightened, though partially corrupt, priesthood caused these vast piles to rise in honour of the great Creator of the universe, so far as he was then known to them, under the type of *Jupiter Ammon*. These are greater and more glorious temples than were ever dedicated *directly* to the true and only God since the creation of this world. I now leave thee for an hour. * * * * * Ha! has not thy fit of abstraction left thee yet? thy eyes are still

"With a fine phrensy rolling,"

and thou hast drunk in sublimity enough from this overflowing fountain to supply the poetical springs of thy soul for an age to come. Would that the inspiration were now manifest in sound for our especial benefit. One bold burst of enthusiastic sentiment at this moment were worth a whole quarto of cantering hexameters from the closet. Thy muse is silent: try, then, a little invocation. Begin,

"Descend, ye nine," &c.

Thou'rt not in the vein, I perceive. Come down, then, to humble prose, and scan by architectural rule that which thy poetical measure cannot at present compass.

Turn first to the south. The most striking object which arrests our attention on the left is a propylon tottering as if on the verge of annihilation, very similar in appearance to that of the Memnonium, though vastly more imposing

and gigantic. That artificial cavity midway to the top is part of the interior gallery and staircase leading to the summit, as usual in all these edifices. Near the lower part of the same are large apartments, probably used by the guards and keepers of the gates. This is one of a triple range of propylæ; the two others you see a short distance to the south are much less shaken by the earthquake. The elevated gateways through them are lined with enormous slabs of highly-polished red granite. In front of each propylon, and on each side of the gateway, are immense colossal statues in granite and stone, from thirty to forty feet in height, though now half buried in rubbish. Obelisks *always* were in advance of all propylæ; and, wherever these are found wanting, as in this case, we must seek them among the ruins of more modern Alexandria, in the stadium of Constantine at Byzantium, in the piazzas of Rome, and the avenues of Paris. It is easy to account for these three magnificent entrances, one succeeding the other, at this particular point. The avenue which they guarded led from a temple some distance away from Carnac, which must have been peculiarly holy, directly to the first and most ancient part of the city of temples behind us. The smaller propylon on our right, through which we entered from the avenue of sphinxes leading from Luxor, is doubtless a subsequent erection, made to communicate with the more modern part of the great temple of Carnac.

To the west we see over the wall which connects the latter propylon with the western front of the temple. The view is only bounded by the Libyan mountains some miles distant. We can just discern the Memnonium and Medinat Abu at their base, and a small strip of river which cuts the plain, and is now sunk deep below its banks.

Turn now towards the north. On our left is *the* great propylon *par excellence*, and the most magnificent one in all Egypt. We shall see it to more advantage when we walk

through it to the interior of the temples. The tall insulated columns behind it are in the first great court of the temple, which was covered with a roof supported by these columns, the same as in the case of Luxor. By far the grandest and most perfect feature on this site is the great Hall of Columns directly in front of us.

You have contemplated the exterior grandeur of this vast pile, and, as we are to pass through it, we willl leave it for the present. Perhaps you do not remark one very peculiar, and, to me, singularly impressive feature about all we have been contemplating. All we have yet seen, from the smallest propylon to the vast, magnificent, and truly astonishing monument before us, the Hall of Columns, are but *entrances* and *antechambers* to something more vast, more magnificent, more holy, and more ancient. Where is that something? you ask. Gone! When the vengeance of an offended God swept over the devoted land of the heathen gentile, the proud fane of Theban Ammon was struck down to the dust, and lies buried under yonder heap of rubbish. These proud trappings, the gifts of long lines of Pharaohs, are left standing, as mementoes to all future times of the splendour, magnificence, and magnitude of the principal fane, and to point out the spot where it lies entombed. Its epitaph is engraved on those mighty tombstones which surround this grave of heathen Egypt. Why is it that the solid walls of the great Egyptian Pantheon were shaken down to their very foundations, while those tall columns were permitted to stand erect, and to this day support the superincumbent weight of roof? You perceive that the Hall of Columns, by its peculiar construction, was always as light inside as the day without; but the interior of the temple itself was, of course, as all others were, perfectly dark, and in it deeds of darkness and all sorts of abominations were practised, as part of the religious creed and daily observance of this nation of base idolaters. Hence it was that the avenging hand of

the outraged Majesty of Heaven was particularly directed towards this great mother of Egyptian iniquity. She has been laid in the dust, while many of her children in other places have been passed over, partly in contempt, and partly, perhaps, with a view to perpetuate the record of abomination so deeply engraven on all their walls.

Let us now take a rapid view of the interior, ere the setting sun shall leave it in obscurity. We will pass out at the gate by which we entered, and walk round to the western and principal front. You perceive that another double row of sphinxes marks the great avenue towards the Nile. Every approach to this temple had a similar avenue, similarly ornamented. This greatest of all the great propylæ of Egypt measured *four hundred feet long!* forty feet thick, and proportionably high. When surmounted with its tall *masts*, ornamented with banners, pennons, and oriflammes, its effect must have been very imposing on those who approached it from the Nile. It is of modern construction when compared with the other sacred edifices behind it. It is in an unfinished state, and not adorned with sculptures. Its ascertained age is now three thousand years. We will cross the first great court, which is three hundred feet square, with small temples on the side. Through a smaller propylon is a gateway, more than twenty feet wide and sixty feet high, at one time guarded by brazen doors. A noble entrance, truly, to the noblest hall ever built by man! The perspective of the vast central colonnade is seen to better advantage from this entrance than when we shall have passed it; for there the senses are overpowered by the forest of gigantic columns on every side. I can compare these great centre columns to no other familiar object than tall light-houses or shot-towers, such as we have at home. Of course, such immense masses could not be monolithic; but are composed of huge blocks, piled one on the other by the aid of some powerful engine.

But it is time to enter; for see, the almost horizontal rays of the setting sun are producing lights and shadows in this mysterious hall, which give a much finer effect than the vertical meridian beams can possibly afford.

The next finest point of view is in the centre of this great hall. Every way you turn, you perceive there is a fine perspective. To the west, through the gateways, the distant mountains of Libya bound the view. Through the opposite entrance to the hall, the eye rests on the sad ruins of the ancient temple. On every side is a forest of massy columns, the largest of which are twelve feet in diameter, the whole number about one hundred and fifty.

The architecture of this hall differs from anything I have seen in Egypt. In all the other temples, I have observed that the columns which support the roof are of equal size and height, consequently the roof which they support is level throughout with the side-walls of the building. Here, you perceive, it is entirely otherwise. The two rows of gigantic columns which run through the centre of the hall are nearly seventy feet high, while the nine rows on each side are only forty feet. The platform or roof which the centre colonnade supports is consequently about thirty feet higher than the roofs on each side of it. Short columns, which stand on the low roofs, reach up to the level of the higher roof, and support its extremities. Between these short columns are immense stone window-frames, through which light and air were admitted to this vast area.

When I first saw this peculiar construction, I was forcibly struck with its perfect resemblance to the Gothic cathedral style of building, in which the nave is always nearly twice as high as the aisles, with windows above the roofs of the latter. There can be no doubt in my mind that the Saracens took their idea from this very hall, on which the Gothic builders (who employed Saracen architects in Sicily and Spain) improved by reducing the diameters of the

columns, and supporting from the summits their aspiring arches. This hall, no doubt, served for a promenade for the priests, sheltered from the scorching rays of a tropical sun by the heavy stone roof, the cool breezes entering by the ample north windows above; while to the south, curtains or awnings kept out the sun. I doubt if these windows were ever glazed; for, as it is never cold, nor ever rains here, there was no necessity for such protection. The whole interior appears once to have been stuccoed and highly ornamented.

Observe yon tall column, which presents the most extraordinary feature that I have ever beheld among ruins in any part of the world. It is broken off near the ground, and leans over, supported by its neighbour, at an angle of at least thirty degrees from the perpendicular. This, in a shaft of one single stone, would be nothing remarkable, for hundreds are seen everywhere in a similar position among important ruins. But this column being composed of numerous blocks, in layers one above the other, with no cement or central pins to bind them together, the great mystery is that the centre does not give way, and the whole mass fall to the ground, being only supported at each end.

The other day we pulled out from between two stones a *wooden* cramp or anchor, which had been used to keep the joints together. It has the saw marks upon it, showing that the use of that instrument was known four thousand years ago at least.

Some have endeavoured to deduce proof, from the employment of wooden cramps in buildings, in support of the very silly and unscientific theory that iron was unknown to the ancient Egyptians. It has always been the received opinion of every philosophic mind, that, without the knowledge of this all-important gift of an all-wise Creator, nations could not have been civilized. Besides, I have somewhere read of a civilized people being deprived of it relapsing into

barbarism. The Egyptian architect knew too well the value of this material to employ it wastefully; for the soft sandstone from which we took the wooden cramp was of a weaker texture than the wood, and gave way before it when force was used to separate them. Finally, will these visionary theorists inform us how the hard granite and syenite were separated from the mountain rock, worked into huge obelisks and columns, and elaborately carved, without the best of steel made from iron?

The sun is setting; let us hurry through with a few more of the important features of this place before we are driven from it by the night.

Passing out of the east entrance of the hall, we enter upon the most appalling field of desolation that the world presents.

Hold! we can proceed no farther unless we conclude to bivouac here for the night. We will, from this elevation, take a rapid glance over the sad remains of the principal temple and courts of Carnac, and endeavour to imagine what they were

> "Three thousand years ago,
> When the Memnonium was in all its glory,
> And time had not begun to overthrow
> Those temples, palaces, and piles stupendous,
> Of which the very ruins are tremendous."

Around us are tall obelisks still erect, while others are prostrate and broken. In the mass of confusion before you, to the east, can easily be traced the foundations of the great temple which once covered the sanctuary, built of granite, yet perfect. Beyond are the remains of two other large temples connected with the principal one. Their corridors are supported by colossal caryatides instead of columns. And finally, the propylon seen at the end of the perspective terminates this series of temples and palaces, which in length, between the grand western propylon and the one at

the eastern extremity, is a quarter of a mile of continuous buildings, which it would require a week to examine even in a very superficial manner. I have not permitted you to glance at the sculptures innumerable that cover the storied walls and columns both inside and out; for months would not suffice to follow up the histories thereon engraved in characters which will last to the end of time.

The last trembling ray of the setting sun is just tipping with gold the highest projections of the ruins; as to the chaos below,

> "Shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it."

Take now your last farewell look upon this awful "wreck of matter," and tremble at the mighty earthquake which produced it,

> "And shook the pyramids with fear and wonder,
> When the gigantic Memnon fell asunder."

We are again returned to our floating home, and I hope your long day's ride has given you an appetite that will do honour to the talents of our *chef de cuisine*, of which you shall have proof.

Ali, hold my stirrup while I dismount. Here, *Selim*, take my dirk and pistols, and look well to the priming before bedtime. *Giovanni*, send a boat for our guests; do give those Arabs a sheep, and keep them quiet for the night.

François, there are three extra *couverts* to-day, you recollect; are your jellies and creams as good as usual? Si signora. Let's have an *omelette soufflé* for six, and maraschino after coffee.

LETTER XIX.

Valley of the Dead.—Entrance to the Tombs of the Pharaohs.—Explorations of Belzoni.—Interior of the Tombs.—Ancient Furniture.—Descent into the "Bottomless Pit."—A March by Torchlight.—A grand Finale.—Fruitless Negotiations.—"Nothing venture, nothing gain."—A Hunt for Antiquities.—The Result.

At anchor off Memphis, ——.

It is now two entire weeks since we have communed together. Since which time our boat has been leisurely floating down with the current, landing us at all the interesting points on the river. Occasional heavy head winds caused us to lie by several times.

We are now at anchor, waiting the return of a messenger sent to Cairo to ascertain the state of health of the place before we venture to mix with its squalid population at this warm season. In the mean while, I cannot employ my time more agreeably than by taking a retrospect of the past fortnight for your amusement.

We parted last at Thebes, where I proposed to you to accompany me one evening to the *Tombs of the Kings*. We were prevented from accomplishing our purpose by the fatigues of our last day at Thebes, and the interruption of company to dinner the same evening. I will, therefore, give you now but a short and imperfect sketch of my visit to those interesting monuments.

Shortly after our arrival at Thebes, we set out early one morning to visit the tombs. We loitered by the way, so that we did not arrive at the entrance of the Valley of the Dead until midday.

When we reached that point where the line of mountain wall turns from west to south, we entered a gorge which runs for a short distance towards the west, and then sudden-

ly turns to the south, leaving between us and the plain of Thebes, on the left, a high range of mountain, perfectly bare of vegetation.

Indeed, the whole valley and the mountain on both sides are not only entirely devoid of vegetable life, but when the meridian sun pours its vertical beams into this narrow rocky valley, it seems as if a river of flame flowed through it, threatening to annihilate whatever of *animal* life dared venture to stem its current.

Not a breath of air can penetrate this deep dell, enclosed on all sides by high cliffs of rock. The rays of the sun are poured upon the head, reflected from the sand below into the face and eyes, and reverberated from the sides of the mountain as from a furnace seven times heated. Formerly there was no access to this basin of fire; but a passage was cut through the lowest point of rocks to facilitate the ingress of processions.

From the entrance of the valley to its extreme head, where the tombs are situated, is about two miles, with just sufficient room between the inclined bases of the mountains for a horse-path.

Arriving at the entrance of the tombs, we found that they were under the east mountain, and their shafts running directly towards the plain of the city. The level of the upper part of the valley is considerably higher than the rocky flat on which stand the Memnonium and the other temples.

The first object that presented itself to our view was an inclined passage-way, cut in the sloping side of the base of the mountain, about twelve feet wide and open at top. When this passage reaches far enough into the rock to show a perpendicular face in front of about twenty feet, then commences the mining operation. Here is an ornamented doorway, eight feet wide by ten feet high, with the usual winged globe over it.

The tunnel hence has a more rapid descent for about one

hundred feet, with little chambers on each side. This passage has its sides highly sculptured and beautifully painted. The ceiling is black, with white stars. The whole length of several of the various tombs is three to four hundred feet from the outer door. At the end of the first gallery commences a flight of steps, which lead down to a square chamber about twenty feet diameter, the roof supported by columns of native rock left for that purpose. Other flights of steps conduct to similar chambers, of which, in some cases, there are a dozen or more (one lower than the other) before one reaches the great state chamber, in which is found an enormous granite sarcophagus, that once held the body of one of the long line of Pharaohs who ruled over Egypt.

This royal chamber in one tomb is thirty feet by twenty, and twenty-seven feet high, with no supporting columns: but the roof is cut in the form of a high arch. In this chamber, in the tomb discovered by Belzoni, the sarcophagus was made of semi-transparent alabaster, covered within and without with elegant bas-relief. This sarcophagus now belongs to the King of England. When it was removed, a secret passage was discovered, leading down in an inclined direction towards the plain of the Memnonium. Belzoni followed it three hundred feet, until he was prevented from going any farther by the rubbish with which it was encumbered. He was then about seven hundred feet from the western base of the hill; and, if the gallery continues in the same direction, it would open into the great Valley of the Assaseif. It is a pity that he had not completed his exploration, and solved the problem of an entrance from the temples to all the tombs.

From the extraordinary quantity of ornament lavished upon the walls and ceilings of all these chambers, it has been suggested that it was never intended that, after each monarch had been laid in his granite sepulchre, the tomb should be closed upon him for ever, but that these chambers were

used by the priests for some part of their mysterious worship, or for worse purposes. My opinion is, that after the great state procession, when the body of the sovereign was carried round through the valley of fire (which I have described to you as a sort of purgatory), and taken into the tomb by the entrance tunnel, the door to the tunnel was then for ever closed to the public, as all other tombs are. The secret passages from the temples gave the sensual priesthood access to these beautiful halls, directly from their temples and cloisters.

There is a hackneyed quotation used by every traveller, from Bruce down to the last John Bull who has visited those tombs; it is, however, so apposite, that I cannot refrain from repeating it. The words are from Ezekiel, when he alluded to the heathen practices of the Jews in subterranean places. "Then he said unto me, Son of man, dig now into the wall: and when I had digged into the wall, behold a door. And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do there. So I went in and saw; and behold, every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall round about." With respect to these tombs, or rather saloons, wherein were held the profane orgies of a corrupt priesthood, the passage of Ezekiel is so graphic and so appropriate, that every one who enters them is peculiarly struck with the words of the inspired writer.

For me to attempt to give anything like a description of the "*abominable beasts*," and curious devices with which the walls are covered, would be an endless task, even if my descriptive powers were adequate to it. I must refer you to Belzoni's own account of the extraordinary discovery he made of a tomb which had not been visited probably since the time of Cambyses. There were originally forty-seven of these extraordinary excavations, which have been lost for centuries, except twenty-one. These are much injured and

defaced by the Arabs, but the last was as perfect as when first closed. Those remaining have their entrances hidden by accumulations from the disintegrated rocks above, which have choked up the galleries that lead to their outer doors. There is a rich field, therefore, remaining for future antiquarian harvests.

It appears that the rock in which these tombs are excavated is a sort of soft limestone, nearly white. When the walls were cut down smooth, the fissures were filled up with stucco before the sculptures were executed. These sculptures are in very low relief, and beautifully coloured; the colours as fresh as if laid on yesterday. One chamber appeared to have been just excavated when the idol worship of Egypt received its quietus. The walls are only rough hewn. Another chamber is just ready for the sculptor. All the figures are outlined with red chalk, the fine strokes of which are as perfect as when the artist's hand left them. In the little side chambers of the gallery leading to one of the tombs are some curious paintings, representing articles of household furniture, ornament, &c. Among which I saw sofas, ottomans, tabourets, and couches, of forms very similar to many now in use. Two large *fauteuils* were of such exquisite form and so richly carved, that I could not consent to leave them behind, but wanted the gentlemen to cut them from the wall and take them away with us. However Gothic and barbarous this act would have been, we had numerous precedents for it in the theft of former travellers of very scientific notoriety. They were not driven, however, to this Vandalian measure in order to gratify me, for a very talented young Irish gentleman whom we met at Thebes volunteered to copy them for me. The *fauteuils* which these drawings represent appear to have been covered with the richest plaid velvet, with raised figures. The carvings were gilt. From the taste displayed in the designs, I should pronounce them to be Greek in any other part of the world

except in the tomb of Pharaoh Necho. I will say no more of these tombs; for I find it impossible to arrange my confused ideas, or more confused notes, concerning them, so as to say anything satisfactory to you of these wonderful works of human labour and art.

While our Irish friend was engaged copying for me, and the gentlemen holding candles for him, I took Selim and an Arab guide with a torch, and descended into the bottomless pit of the tomb of Pharaoh, there to enjoy alone such reflections as the nature of the place might inspire. I said *bottomless pit*, yet, from some of these chambers, there are perpendicular shafts which have never yet been fully explored, and no one knows their depth, or whether they do not lead down to another and a deeper range of chambers beneath; perhaps to places where yet may be discovered the embalmed bodies of legions of priests.

While indulging in similar reflections, I felt come over me all the enthusiasm of a confirmed antiquarian explorer, and desired to lead the van of a mining party, to "dig into the wall," and make new discoveries which might eclipse the splendid feats of the great Belzoni.

I will not now trouble you with all the curious daydreams which I enjoyed in the bosom of the Libyan mountains, with five hundred feet of rock above my head, while the lurid glare of my torch displayed all around me the hideous forms and monstrosities of Egyptian mythology.

After an hour or two spent between dreaming and reading old Herodotus, I once more joined the gentlemen, who had finished their drawings.

We all emerged from the gallery; and, instead of finding daylight without, we were ushered from the obscurity within to what was in reality "outer darkness;" for night had thrown over the valley her sable mantle while we were idling away the time in the heart of the mountain. It was an impressive scene, and one which I shall ever remember,

that of our cavalcade defiling through this rocky gorge by torchlight. Ever and anon the gaping entrance to a tomb was suddenly lighted by a gleam from our numerous torches, around which myriads of bats were hovering, while the owl made the caverns echo with her funereal note.

A grand finale to this torchlight march occurred in the most rugged part of the glen. A dead silence reigned through the whole party; nothing was heard save the sharp crisp echo of the horses' tread in the rough, sandy path. All of a sudden a crackling noise was heard beneath their feet. Looking down, I discovered skeletons of mummies strewed about, brought hither from some mummy-pit which had been rifled by the Arabs, in search of the paltry ornaments and porcelain idols found upon the bodies of the lower orders of the children of the Nile. This, however, had been of so common occurrence with us, that it excited little notice, except from the sudden and unexpected appearance of them at night, and the sharp crash caused by the iron feet of our steeds.

One of our party, in a freak of merry humour, slipped from his horse, drew together several of these vials of Sabean gums, and touched a torch to them. In a moment the hills, from base to summit, were illuminated; the sky above was as black as Erebus, while the prowling jackals and hyenas flew away from the light, barking and screaming as if old Typhon himself had been let loose upon them. The blaze of this hecatomb of Pharaoh's subjects lighted the remainder of our path through the defile. In a short time we were once more on board our boat.

When our party set out in the morning for the tombs by way of the valley, my husband went to pay a visit to a Greek who resides near the mountain opposite, and behind the Memnonium. The object of this visit was to negotiate with him for some antiquities which he was said to possess.

The pacha had some time since forbidden, under very

heavy penalties, any excavation or search for antiquities and treasures to be made in any part of his dominions, giving as a reason that the *fellahs* neglected the cultivation of the soil, and, consequently, curtailed his revenues. Another reason is alleged for this arbitrary order; it is, that several collections of Egyptian antiquities have been sold in England lately at enormous prices by private speculators. This has excited the old Shylock's cupidity, and he has forbidden the exportation from the country of the least article of *virtu*. The Greek's house was watched day and night by some of his arguses. We thought, however, that by a little backshee soporific, the guards might be put *hors du combat*. The old Greek was too much in fear of the bastinado to break the law, and the negotiation resulted much to our disappointment. Our principal object was to obtain one of the beautifully ornamented mummy-cases, with its Pharaoh or pontiff within it untouched. He showed my husband a great number which he had obtained some time previous, but dared not part with one. All that could be obtained were the spoils of one beautiful female mummy, supposed to have been a person of great distinction. It was enclosed in three distinct coffins, one within the other; the innermost splendidly decorated with painting and gilding. We obtained the face which was carved on the inner case, and supposed to be an exact resemblance to the person enclosed when alive. The face is heavily gilded, and the gold perfectly fresh. From this same body we obtained the bead ornaments, idols, and a small basket of biscuit, in as perfect a state as when it came out of the oven three thousand years ago. Also a small wooden tablet covered with white linen, on which are painted certain hieroglyphics, said to be a funeral prayer by those learned in this mystic lore. Last of all was a large shawl or funeral pall, three yards long by one and a half wide, with a fringe on each end. It is made of linen, and as perfect as when it came from the loom of Egypt or India.

The Greek said that he had hidden in a tomb in the edge of the desert a great number of this superior order of mummies, from which we might select a couple for a small price, if we could prevail upon some Arab to smuggle them on board in the night; but our time was then too short to enter upon this contraband speculation. From the point where the Greek's house was situated, my husband determined to scale the mountain wall, and meet us at the tombs of the kings, which he did, while the thermometer stood at one hundred and thirty. He found the altitude of this rocky barrier to be seven hundred and fifty feet at this its lowest point.

Every night we lay alongside the shore at Thebes, we had messages sent us through our interpreter Giovanni, from some fellahs on shore, that, if the gentlemen would land at midnight, and meet them at a given point, they would sell them any quantity of "anticas." But they must come alone with their money, and with no witness to betray them. These were hard terms; but, contrary to my entreaties, they determined to follow the old adage, "nothing venture, nothing gain." So one dark night, precisely at twelve, they put themselves under the charge of their swarthy guide, first arming themselves well with a double brace of pistols each and a dirk. After wading a mile through wheatfields up to their chin, they came to the edge of the desert, and another half mile brought them and their conductor to the outskirts of an Arab village. They entered a mud-walled court, which was built in front of a ledge of rock. At the farther end was an excavation, which was the entrance to a chamber hewn in the rock. This was the habitation of the person to whom they had trusted themselves. All the furniture of this domicil was a mat or two on a raised platform of rock, two or three water-jars, and a cooking vessel, with a few rude agricultural instruments. The female part of the family were not "at home," and the equally loquacious

dogs were carefully kept out of the way. Until now not a word had passed. They were here joined by some other being, who could not be distinguished in the dark. They groped their way down a few steps into another chamber, when, for the first time, a light was struck. This excavation in the rock proved to be a tomb of ancient times, but now perfectly black with smoke. They descended several other flights of steps to other chambers, and wound through an intricate passage until they came to a small, low apartment, about ten feet square, at least two hundred feet from the first entrance. Such had been the hurry and precipitancy of these movements, that the Frank gentlemen had no time to reflect upon the possibility of danger or of being betrayed. When this thought rushed upon them, they were for retreating immediately, but this would have been unavailing without a guide. Here they said that Cromwell's caution came quite apropos, "Trust in God, but keep your powder dry." In this chamber the great negotiation for *anticas* was to be made. The guide made a sign to them to be seated on the side of an old sarcophagus. Soon after which came in another, and another dingy imp, each with something wrapped up in the skirt of his garment. The torch was stuck in the ground in the centre of the room, around which half a dozen squalid creatures seated themselves. One brought out a large stone image similar in form to the musical Memnon, very roughly cut, and evidently a counterfeit. Next a half bushel of *scarabei*, as large as terrapins, also counterfeits, and made from the soft chalk rock, and then boiled in asphaltum, to give them the genuine mummy odour.

These sharpers tried several more such shallow tricks, all of which failed. They then produced a large bronze vessel, covered with hieroglyphics, a genuine antique; at the sight of which the antiquity-hunters from the New World could not restrain their emotion. Taking advantage of this,

they demanded ten times its value, nor would they abate a piastre. Twenty dollars, or even fifty, were not too much for an old kettle in which Pharaoh's chief butler was wont to boil his rice. Their price was a hundred.

Some very handsome, small, genuine scarabei were produced, which, together with a half bushel of porcelain or blue glazed earthen idols, some painted wooden ones, and a few other equally rare articles, were the final result of this great under-ground trade. And glad were the speculators to get off so cheap, and to be returned in safety to the boat.

We made heavy purchases in the dark of *papyri*, most of which turned out to be bits of old Greek manuscript rolled up *secundum artem*, and sealed with asphaltum—regular cheats. We, however, procured several genuine and very curious ones.

As soon as we had returned from our visit to the tombs of the kings, we ordered all our men on board, and drew off into the stream, ready for a fair start in the morning, after we had seen the sun rise once more on Luxor's Obelisk and Carnac's towers.

I am just now called to make an excursion on shore to revisit the site of Memphis. On my return I will employ my afternoon and evening in fulfilling the promise I made in the commencement of this epistle, and float down with you from Thebes to Memphis. Therefore, au revoir.

LETTER XX.

Return to Cairo.—Preparations for a Journey.—Descent of the Nile.—Koum Ombos.—Crocodile Worship.—Quarries of Hadjar Silsili.—Grottoes of Eleithias.—Temple of Dendera.—Egyptian Mysteries.—Water-jars of Genneh.—Nile Water.—Copts.—The Moonlight of Egypt.—Perilous Adventure.—Travelling Comforts.

Grand Cairo, ——.

I NOW profit by the first leisure moment I have had since our arrival here, to give you the account of our voyage on the Nile from the Cataracts to Cairo, which I promised the other day, and which circumstances have prevented me from writing until now.

I will first remark, that, so far from finding any *plague* on our arrival here, we might have brought it with us, and inoculated the whole city, had it not been for the strict quarantine which we kept while passing through infected districts up the river.

On our return we found all our friends in good health. Our kind young consul had not forgotten us; for, during our absence, he has attended to all the matters left by us in his charge, and has made all the arrangements necessary for our journey to the Holy Land by way of the desert. He has caused to be made for us a large and comfortable tent, with two apartments, together with all the necessary apparatus of a caravan expedition. Instead of the usual imperfect and disagreeable arrangement for carrying water by means of bags made of skins, rendered water-tight by asphaltum (taken from the mummies—only think of it!), he has caused to be made several casks of an oval form, two of which, when filled, are a load for one camel. We shall thus be provided with that most essential article in the desert, water

in abundance, pure and sweet. There is nothing to prevent our setting off immediately but the return of Mustafa, who has gone to a fair in the Delta, where he is charged with the purchase of a large Bactrian camel for my particular accommodation. Journeys in the desert are made by men on the back of the dromedary, which is a small, light race of camel, trained expressly for riding. But as its gait is very hard, and somewhat dangerous, females seldom use them, particularly those who are unaccustomed to that mode of conveyance.

As hundreds of pious female pilgrims every year join the great caravan for Mecca, means of conveyance more appropriate to their delicate habits have been invented. A sort of palanquin is placed on the back of a camel, furnished with a bed, on which the lady can either sit up, recline, or lie down at full length. Four upright posts support a canopy, from which on all sides depend curtains, to protect the traveller from the burning sun. As the ordinary Arabian camel is too small to support so much weight on a long journey, recourse is had to a larger race, natives of Bactria, in Central Asia. They are not always to be found here. At this moment there are none, all having been taken up for the use of recently departed hadjees. At the fair now being held in the Delta, it is expected that Mustafa may be able to procure one from the Syrians who frequent that market. Should he not be successful, I cannot think of venturing upon the desert on the wooden saddle of the dromedary's mountain back. In the mean time, let us return to the Cataracts, and renavigate the Nile to this place.

We left Assouan (Syene) on the morning of the 17th of March (the thermometer stood at 84 at four P.M.), and arrived here on the 10th of April. Deducting the week passed at Thebes, seventeen days are left for our voyage to this place.

When we returned from Philæ we found our boat pre-

senting quite a different appearance from what she did when we left her in the morning.

The tall yards were taken down and hung lengthwise (or fore and aft, as the sailor says) above the deck, half way up the short masts. These long sticks formed the ridge-pole of an enormous tent, which covered the whole vessel, made of one of our large lateen sails. Ropes from one shroud to the other served as eaves to our canvass roof. As the prevailing winds at this season are from the north, very strong in the daytime, with calms at night, sails would be of no use, and the great yards in their places an actual hinderance. Hence the dismantled state of our boat. When we moved off in the morning, I was surprised to see ten enormous oars (called sweeps) expand like so many wings from the sides of the vessel, worked by twenty men. At the sight of this manœuvre, I became somewhat concerned at the prospect of our being obliged to paddle six hundred miles down to Cairo with only twenty men. I soon learned, however, that we were not to depend entirely on oars for our progress. The current was to do the needful, the oars merely serving, by a gentle motion, to give the vessel a little speed beyond that of the current, in order that the rudder might act, and keep her head the right way, out of the eddies and away from shoals.

All this was very pretty in theory, but how the practical part was sustained we shall see hereafter. By ten o'clock the first day, as the heat of the sun increased, so did the north wind. Current and oars availed us little against the power of Boreas. So we were compelled to cast anchor, and wait for sundown, when the wind usually ceases.

When our bark, in ascending the river, was gayly flaunting before the cool breezes of the north, we were constantly chanting pæans to the victorious Osiris. Now, enraged at his pertinacious resistance to our homeward course, we were ready to hurl anathemas in the face of Egypt's holiest

god, and throw ourselves upon the tender mercy of the furious Typhon, with his red-hot breath of Hades.

When the first effects of our disappointment began to subside, Patience, that divinity at whose shrine all Orientals pay such homage, came to our relief.

Of all the virtues, none is so essential to a traveller in the East as *patience*, enduring patience. It is said that a sea-voyage is the best test of temper; but wait till you travel in the East, and are for ever at the mercy of indolent Turks and more lazy Arabs (to say nothing of the elements), then judge for yourself.

It is often said that "patience is a jewel," and full well have I learned to prize it.

After the last prayer to the Prophet, our crew partook of their evening meal; then, as if they had had no rest for the day, they one and all spread themselves over the forward deck, and in a minute were in a profound sleep, where they would have remained till sunrise but for the quickening influence of old Ali, who roused them to their work. The anchor was raised and the oars put in motion, when the man at the leading oar took the lead in another part of the ceremony. It was nothing more or less than an Arab *chant* by the whole crew, which lasted, with little interruption, all the way to Cairo.

I shall not attempt, at this time, to give you a *diary* of our voyage; for seventeen days' experience of this kind would be too much for your patience or even mine, schooled as it now is in Orientalism. I will confine myself, therefore, to a few general remarks, which I hope may serve to give you some idea of a voyage down the Nile.

However novel and amusing to me was this Arab music at first, and reminding me of the boat-songs of our Canadian *voyageurs*, yet these laboured accents soon palled upon the ear, and I could not help comparing them in my mind to

the doleful, measured strains of the Roman galley-slaves who once toiled in agony upon these waters.

This nightly serenade was a periodical torment to us, interrupting conversation and preventing sleep. That which served as an anti-soporific to us seemed to act as a charm upon our pilot, lulling him to sleep; for several times in the night he would run the boat fast upon a shoal. All hands, dropping their oars, would soon follow his example. Aware of the cause of all this silence on deck, one of the gentlemen would go out and find every soul asleep, not excepting our stalwart knight and body-guard Giovanni, who sat by our cabin door, with his Russian blade across his arm, dreaming of those he had left beyond the Balkan. Ali, too, nothing loath to taste the ruby cup with his sturdy chum of Muscovy, lay in sweet forgetfulness beside him, grasping his bamboo as if it were the wand of Morpheus.

Mars and his lieutenant being aroused, the militant couple fell upon the delinquent Arabs, and drove them over the side of the vessel into the water, where, placing their shoulders to the bow, after many Herculean efforts, they succeeded in putting us afloat again. Then, resuming their oars and song, we glided smoothly down with the stream, so long as our steersman kept himself awake, and the vessel in the channel.

Taking pity on these poor creatures, we every night ordered coffee and sugar for them, and frequently gave them a sheep wherewithal to savour their lentil broth.

By thus fortifying their strength, we enabled them to perform steadily and cheerfully the arduous duties which we were obliged to exact from them, and by that means we shortened our voyage at least a week. So much for the *modus operandi* of mere locomotion. Our days at first were passed on shore, whenever the wind prevented our progress. We always endeavoured to reach some interesting point by the time the wind rose; failing in this, we

would sometimes get horses and go on ahead, leaving the boat to overtake us in the evening. The first morning after we left Syene we landed at *Koum Ombos*, where we saw the ruins of its once magnificent temple, and were particularly impressed with the enormous size of the stones used in its walls, some of which we measured, and found them to be twenty-four feet long by six feet thick.

The crocodile was the deity worshipped here, and we saw the tanks wherein his godship swam in state, and made his saintly *déjeûné*, frequently upon *human* victims. However the Ombians may have held in estimation their cannibal deity, it would appear that of other tribes there were "none so vile as to do him reverence;" for Juvenal says, that in his time,

> "An antiquated grudge, a mortal hate,
> The Ombian people and the neighbouring state
> Of Tentyra, down to this day divides,
> Which lapse of years nor tends to heal nor hides.
> High runs the feud, and this the cause of all,
> Each holds the other's gods no gods at all."

Rivers of blood were shed between the states of Egypt to maintain the honour of their respective gods: the

> Dog head Anubis, furious Tithrambo,
> Mendes the he-goat, and the blind mouse Buto;
> Isis *leo*, Isis *vaca*, Typhon vile,
> Baby Horus and the scaly crocodile.

The head wind which opposed us the second day gave us a fair opportunity to view the immense quarries of *Hadjar Silsili*, from which the stone for all the temples of Egypt was taken.

At this point an immense belt of sandstone mountain traverses the country from east to west, and divides the granite region of Syene from the calcareous formations which extend to the Mediterranean.

The stone of Silsili is of a yellowish colour, darker than the Bath stone of England, but equally soft, and as easily

worked. It can be cut with a knife, and hence the facility of carving such *acres* of bas-reliefs as are found in Egypt. These tremendous cliffs overhang the river on both sides, which is here so narrow that persons can converse across the stream, one in Libya and the other in Arabia. Enormous blocks of stone are seen lying in the quarries ready for transportation, while others are only half cut loose from the native rock.

On the perpendicular face of one of the quarries, columns and pediments of mock temples are cut, as if for amusement, by the workmen. We lingered here but part of the day, and then resumed our nocturnal voyage.

Another day we landed to visit the great temple at Edfou, one of the finest in Egypt, and second only to Carnac.

At a place called Eleithias, from one of the female goddesses of the Thebaid, the sacred vulture, we saw numerous grottoes cut in the face of the rock far up the side of the mountain, from which there is a very extensive view over the valley of the Nile.

The grottoes are remarkable for the sculptures and paintings which they contain, representing domestic scenes, rural and agricultural customs, feasts, games, musicians, and dancers. In one grotto is a death-bed scene, with preparations for embalming. These are representations nowhere else to be found in Egypt; and they serve to bring one in close contact with the ancient inhabitants of Mizraim, familiarizing one with scenes of every-day life in the times of Pharaoh and Joseph.

At Esneh is another fine temple, half buried in the sand, the interior now used as a depôt for the pacha's tithes of grain and cotton. The next day we arrived at Thebes, which we will now pass and go on to Dendera (*Tentyra*), distant one night's voyage.

The temple of Dendera is one of the most modern, and decidedly the most beautifully ornamented of any in the

country. It is supposed to be of Greco-Egyptian origin, and even the Romans have worked upon its decorations, as records on its walls now state.

There are divinities sculptured on its walls so like those of the cavern temples of Hindostan, that, when the English army from that country was in Egypt, and visited Dendera, it is said, "the Sepoys performed their devotions in these temples with all the ceremonies practised in India."

I should like to accompany thither some learned Brahmin, with the sacred *Vedas* in his hand, and have him explain to me a few of these Egyptian sculptured mysteries, which I am certain his learned order must be able to expound. Perhaps he might recognise among these stone heroes of Tentyra some of the dramatic demigods of the *Sacontala* of *Calidista*, the Shakspeare of ancient India; or, among the mitred pontiffs of Egypt, the grand Oriental trinity described in his holy Sanscrit *Puranas*, as *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, and *Chiva*.

Or, wandering among the ruins of Thebes, perhaps he might see a striking resemblance to the two hundred and ninety-six temples of Branbanan in Java; or in the great propylæ and colonnades of Carnac, types of the pyramids and pagodas of the gigantic royal city of Mavalipouram. Or—but why should I be troubling you with these spectres which are haunting the old lumber-garret of my head? If you should really take any interest in these obsolete matters, or wish to penetrate their mysterious arcana, you have only to study the inimitable and peerless historiographer, *Heeren*. In case you cannot meet with the French translation of his matchless work, you will doubtless find in any of our public libraries a copy of the original *German*. If that should be beyond your depth, you have only to request the assistance of a certain friend of ours, who will doubtles put it all into good King's English for you. After which, by dipping her pen a little deeper in the *Tyrian dye*, she perhaps may be able

to Anglicize for you the ancient Greek fragments of Ctesias, or the more elaborate productions of the later Ptolemy. Should you prefer, however, to rely on your own resources, then study the father of history, the good old Herodotus, done into English; and, for more modern accounts of eastern realms, read the "Asiatic Researches" in connexion with the great French work on Egypt. Besides which, there are the travels of Niebuhr, Burckhardt, Bruce, Valencia, Belzoni, and a score of others.

With the assistance of all the above, and a little sprinkling of personal adventure and spicy anecdote, I think I could now cook up a brace of very palatable duodecimoes, which, if duly savoured with a portion of Attic salt from the stores of Homer, Juvenal, & Co., and garnished with a few green slips from the gardens of Moore and Byron, might be rendered quite an agreeable dish.

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But I am not an aspirant for the honours of authorship, sensible that my powers are not adequate to do justice to the ample store of *materiel* which I have gathered on every side since I parted from you.

The few imperfect sketches which from time to time I am sending you, are but an earnest of those "colloquial pleasures" which I anticipate when we meet again.

"Hail, Conversation, heavenly fair,
Thou bliss of life and balm of care!
* * * * *
Soft polisher of rugged man!
Refiner of the social plan!
For thee, best solace of his toil!
The sage consumes his midnight oil!
And keeps late vigils to produce
Materials for thy future use.
Calls forth the else neglected knowledge
Of school, of travel, and of college!
* * * * *
What stoic traveller would try
A steril soil and parching sky,

Or dare the intemperate northern zone,
If what he saw must ne'er be known?
For this he bids his home farewell;
The joy of seeing is to tell.
Trust me, he never would have stirr'd
Were he forbid to speak a word;
And curiosity would sleep
If her own secrets she must keep:
The bliss of telling what is past
Becomes her rich reward at last.
Who'd mock at death, at danger smile,
To steal one peep at father Nile:
Who at Palmyra risk his neck,
Or search the ruins of Balbeck?
If these must hide old Nilus's front,
Nor Libyan tales at home recount;
If those must sink their learned labour,
Nor with their ruins treat a neighbour;
Range, study, think, do all we can,
Colloquial pleasures are for man."

But I am dallying away my precious time, when I should be conducting you on our way. Oh! for a steamboat, railroad, or balloon, that I might transport you in a trice to the point of our destination. It is yet more than four hundred miles to Cairo, all of which we must paddle down with oars. Let us return, then, to our story.

Nearly opposite to Dendera is *Genneh*, the point of departure for caravans from the Nile to the Red Sea at Cosseir, an ancient port established by the Greeks to carry on their intercourse with India, thereby avoiding the more ancient and tedious route by the Nile through Ethiopia. Genneh was the place where we expected to receive an express from Cairo in case the plague should appear there during our absence. Finding neither courier nor letter, we concluded that we should be safe in descending the river, as the result has proved. We therefore took in at that place a fresh supply of water-jars and *bardacks*, for which it is so famous. These vessels are made of a peculiar sort of earth, and are so porous that the former are used for fil-

tering the turbid waters of the Nile, while the latter (small bottles in the shape of decanters) serve to cool this nectar of Egypt by the constant evaporation from their exterior surface. These bottles are arranged in racks in all the houses, and also in the cabin of our boat. When once the cool neck of one of them is brought to one's lips, there is no such thing as severing the delicious contact until every drop of the refreshing liquid has disappeared. These powerful affinities are brought to bear upon each other several times each hour throughout the day. If another Nile flowed throughout our own land, I am sure that the "*cold water societies*" would predominate over all others, without the aid of *tracts* and preaching, or the expense of much self-denial. It is said by the Egyptians, that when once a person has tasted the water of their delightful river and departed from it, there is no rest until he returns to it again. I hope, however, that this will not be my case; if it should, I will make a pilgrimage to our own Missouri, which, Mr. R. avers, from experience, is quite as celestial as the Ethiopian stream, although the latter flows from the "Mountains of the Moon."

Above Genneh is the small town of Koft, the ancient *Coptos*. This reminds me of that curious and interesting race who are scattered over Egypt. They are the lineal descendants of the ancient Egyptians, uncontaminated with Arab blood; speaking and writing the pure language of their forefathers. It is by the aid of the Coptic that the hieroglyphics of Egypt are deciphered. When it was discovered that a certain class (if not all) of these mysterious symbols possessed a *phonetic* power, the *Coptic* test was applied to them, when a light sprang forth that has rolled back a great portion of those dark clouds which before enveloped in mystery the monumental pages of Egypt.

The brilliant sparks which the genius of Champoillon has since struck out from the granite of the Nile have illumined the darkest recesses of the caverned temples, and

shed a lustre upon their storied obelisks, compared with which the brightest beams of an Arabian sun are as the pale glimmerings of the moon.

Speaking of the moon, I will remark that we have always noticed a peculiarity about the moonlight here which we have never observed in any other country. Although the atmosphere is perfectly cloudless, yet the moon gives very little light. This fact led us to seek for the cause. You remember, in one of my first letters from this country, I spoke of the vapours, which, rising from the Mediterranean, were wafted by the north winds high over Egypt, Nubia, and Abyssinia, to the "Mountains of the Moon," where, being condensed by their cold atmosphere, they were returned again to the sea through the channel of the Nile, thus keeping up an endless circuit. It is only during very high north winds that we observed these vapours to intercept any of the rays of the sun. At other times they were to us unobservable; yet no doubt they have constantly a tendency to soften the intensity of the solar rays. But when the south winds prevail over those of the north, these genial vapours are driven back, and then to the burning heat of the sirocco are superadded the scorching rays of the sun, without the vapoury shield to protect the earth, its vegetation, or its inhabitants.

During the prevalence of the south wind, Isis appeared to us to smile much brighter.

The ancient priesthood took advantage of these phenomena, and from them composed one of their most beautiful *mythes*, that of the perpetual struggles of the *good and evil principles*, or *Osiris and Typhon*.

The name of *Isis* now reminds me of a painful loss which I have lately sustained. When at Thebes an Arab brought me a beautiful young *gazelle*, which I named Isis. We all became very fond of it, and I did hope to be able to bring it home with me; but, a few days after, the servant who

had the care of it brought it to me in the morning *dead.* It had always appeared lively, and took its food well. We never knew the cause of its death, and I have felt disconsolate ever since.

> "I never loved a dear gazelle,
> To glad me with its soft black eye,
> But, when it came to know me well
> And love me, it was sure to die."

One day the gentlemen had an adventure, which came near proving very serious, or possibly fatal. Being informed that a few miles in the desert there was a cave, in which were to be found immense numbers of *crocodile mummies,* they took guides and went to it. After groping their way for several hundred yards through intricate passages, some of which were barely two feet high and wide, they arrived at the mummy chamber. On their way thither, in one of the small caverns, they stumbled over a dead body, which, from the contortions of its face and limbs, indicated a death of great agony. When arrived at the mummy chamber, they made inquiries of the guides, through their interpreter, respecting the body. They informed them that the dead man was one of several Arabs, who, some years ago, had been suffocated there by the mummy-cloth taking fire from their torches. It is quite probable that this explanation of the guides at that moment saved the lives of the gentlemen; for, the instant their guides arrived where the mummies were, they, with candles in their hand, began to turn up and throw about the pitchy and tinderlike cerements which had been torn from hundreds of mummies, at the risk, every moment, of setting fire to them. The gentlemen described their sensations to me as being like what one might suppose a person to feel, should he suddenly and unexpectedly find himself in a room from whence escape was extremely difficult, and see a reckless servant place a candle in the centre of an open barrel of gunpowder. For a moment they

looked at each other horror-struck, and could only make signs to their Arabs to desist from digging for mummies among the mass of inflammable linen, and to remain perfectly quiet. When their presence of mind returned to them, they cautiously took from the hand of each Arab his candle, and extinguished it. Then they instantly left the dangerous place, where a torch was as fearful a companion as it would be in a magazine of powder, which a person is not allowed to enter with even a metal button on his coat or shoes upon his feet. They had just escaped Sylla, and then came near being lost upon Charybdis. The guides desired to return to this chamber to bring away a mummy or two, in order to ensure for themselves some backshee. The gentlemen consented, and returned them their lights, thinking that it was an easy matter to retrace their way to where they had entered the cave. They went on from cavern to cavern, at times lying down to drag themselves through narrow passages just large enough to pass the body through, at others being enabled to sit upright, but seldom to stand. For the space of half an hour they wandered, without recognising where they were or hearing anything of their guides. They then became alarmed, and endeavoured to retrace their steps. In this they were more unfortunate, and took another wrong direction. In the mean while, the guides had returned to the open air, and, not finding them, became alarmed for their safety. Fortunately, the gentlemen, in order to prevent surprise or treachery, had left Giovanni well armed at the mouth of the pit, with orders not to stir from it. But for this precaution, the Arabs might have returned to the village, supposing that the gentlemen had gone back to the boat, in which case they would have been lost or suffocated by the heat and impure air in the cave. The guides returned, and after some time found them; and, when they were safely out, they were nearly exhausted from heat, impure air, and mental excitement. It was not

until they returned to the boat, and referred to the *Modern Traveller*, that they were conscious of the full extent of the danger they had been in; for then it appeared they had been in the same cave in which Mr. Leigh and his companions came so near being lost, and were only saved by the undaunted courage and presence of mind of an American gentleman who was of the party. It was Mr. Leigh's guides who perished in the same caverns, one of whom the gentlemen saw, as I before remarked. They saw the marks of the fire, and brought with them a piece of charred board from the mummy-pit. I have exacted a promise from them not to make any more such hair-brained expeditions while we are travelling; but, without which, I think the painful recollection of their late adventure and fortunate escape from the Arabian labyrinth will serve as a caution to them for all their lives. If you will take the trouble to read Mr. Leigh's account of *his* extraordinary escape from the same place, and of the loss of his guides (in the Modern Traveller, vol. ii., page 32), you will not be surprised at my now going into such details respecting an affair that came so near involving us all in consequences which I shudder now to think of.

Before we arrived at *Siout* we were hailed by a boat just from Cairo, and from her learned that the plague had made its appearance in almost every town along the river. This information, of course, put an end to our land expeditions. Fortunately, the same boat had on board for us a good supply of provisions, sent by our provident Cairo landlord, Mr. Hill, with a store of fine oranges for me. Our greatest solicitude, after the unpleasant intelligence of the plague, was in reference to the strict quarantine which it became necessary for us to keep, and the impossibility of preventing our Arab boatmen from mixing with their friends along the river. For the last week we never went on shore in the vicinity of any habitations.

There are few interesting ruins below Dendera, and those we visited on our voyage up the river.

The first morning that we beheld the Pyramids towering above the plain, we felt as if we were about to re-enter a land of civilization, and we entertained the same sentiments towards this miserable Cairo, that I have observed in travellers arriving in comfortable *Paris* after a hard winter campaign in Italy. Few travellers that ever ascended the Nile have had so pleasant and comfortable a time as we have had, and for the reason that we had the most comfortable boat on the river, and an abundant supply not only of necessaries, but of luxuries seldom thought of by the generality of travellers. For the boat we were indebted to our consul, Mr. Gliddon ; for our larder and stores, to our worthy landlord, Mr. Hill ; and as for the European luxuries with which our table was daily supplied, I was much indebted to the forethought of Mr. R. and my husband, who spared no pains to render my situation in the uncivilized regions we have just visited as agreeable as it was possible to make it. Mr. R., who has been before in tropical climates, and much accustomed to travelling, was perfectly *au fait* with everything required to guard against discomfort, besides having had much experience in medical matters, which is an invaluable thing to us all in these uncivilized regions. Notwithstanding the peculiarly auspicious circumstances under which I have visited the upper country of Egypt, yet, had I been previously apprized of all the unavoidable disagreeables which must be gone through with, I never should have had the courage to undertake the voyage ; for no one who has not visited the wonders of Thebes can estimate the amount of sacrifice they must be willing to make to accomplish so desirable an object.

Now that it is all over, I shall carry away with me from the land of Sesostris, of Pharaoh and of Saladin, a store

of delightful reminiscences, which the longest life could not exhaust.

But that which most contributes to give a zest to all my present enjoyments, is the prospect of ere long returning to my native home, there, in the society of near and dear friends like yourself, to recur to the very many extraordinary and interesting scenes through which I have passed, forgetting all the privations and dangers attendant on them.

In consequence of the atmosphere without being filled with fine particles of dust from the desert, brought hither by the violent kamseen which is now whirling in eddies around the towers of the city, I am confined to the house, and, having no other occupation, I will devote the time to you, and make a few more remarks on such matters relating to Egypt as come first into my mind, without stopping to consider whether I may or may not have before alluded to them.

I have frequently remarked to you how little statistical information can be obtained respecting any of the great eastern capitals or minor cities; but the work of a late French traveller in the East has recently come under my observation, in which I find some curious details respecting the present capital of Egypt, Cairo. He says that this city "is eighteen miles in circuit; that it contains twenty-five thousand houses, two hundred and forty streets, forty-six intersections, three grand squares, thirty-eight *culs de sac*, one hundred and twenty bazars or market-places, twelve hundred *okels* or *entrepôts* of merchandise, eleven hundred and ninety *cafés*, four hundred large and small mosques, three hundred cisterns, three hundred schools, sixty-five public baths," &c., &c. He remarks also that "the population of Cairo is thus divided: ten thousand Copts, three thousand Jews, five thousand Greeks, one thousand Europeans or Franks, ten thousand four hundred Mamelukes, ten thousand Turks, twelve thousand Africans, negroes, Barabrahs, Nu-

bians, and Ethiopians, twenty-one thousand Egyptians, Mussulmans, and Arabs ; in this enumeration neither the slaves nor the numerous inmates of the hareems are counted," making the whole free male population to be about eighty thousand, to which add as many more for the females and slaves, and you have an aggregate of one hundred and sixty thousand, which I should think is not far out of the way. Yet the same author farther remarks, "that the population of Cairo is about what it was at the commencement of the nineteenth century, that is, two hundred and sixty thousand souls ;" but I think he has made a great mistake in this calculation. It must be observed, however, that the plague and cholera have both, since he wrote, been doing their murderous work upon the unfortunate inhabitants of the "victorious capital." These statistical details may at first seem dry and uninteresting, and so perhaps they would be of some German or French city ; but relating as they do to the living shadow of the departed "mother of the world," and the "delight of the imagination" of the Fatimite califs, they are worthy some attention; to say nothing of her being the successor of Misraim's great metropolis, Memphis ! whose granites and marbles have been transferred to the eastern side of the Nile, and piled up into palaces for a Saladin, and the stones of whose walls and temples are now lifted high in air by the proud-swelling domes of the Moslem mosques and the califs' tombs. Do you not inquire who are those ten thousand Copts ? They are the lineal descendants of the ancient Egyptians, the citizens of Thebes and of Memphis, subjects of Sesostris and Pharaoh Necho ; what little they possess of the learning of their ancestors was derived from the schools of Alexandria or the earlier colleges of On, and their ancestors were fellow-students with the foundling Moses. It is from the language preserved by this remnant of the race of old Misraim that the only power is derived by which the hidden mysteries of the sculptured monuments of

Egypt are now being brought to the light of day. This little fragment of one of those mother-tongues which sprang into existence at the confusion of Babel, served as the fulcrum on which the Archimidean lever of Champoillon has lifted a long-lost world of science and literature from out of the night of chaos.

These same Copts, descendants of those who, under "the ruler over all the land of Egypt," Joseph, served in the bureaux of Pharaoh's prime minister as clerks, bookkeepers, and interpreters, are at this day the only scriveners, translators, interpreters, and counting-house clerks in Egypt. The intelligent Christian Copt is now seen in every place of business, where mercantile experience, lingual talent, arithmetical skill, and calligraphic facility are required. His head is enveloped in a Cachmere turban, and around his person are flowing robes, confined at the waist by a shawl girdle, from out of which is seen peeping a brass case, containing the implements of his craft, inkstand and pens.

The Copts are decidedly the most civilized, enlightened, and educated of all the various native races of the Egyptian valley.

Who are those three thousand Jews? In one of the capitals of Europe or in our own country, nearly all of the same number would be of German or Polish origin; but those who now hover round the vicinity of Memphis, once the arbiter of a world's commerce, are from every quarter of the known world where the children of Israel or Judah may have strayed. The Jew of Bombay or Madras here breaks the unleavened bread with him of Moscow or of Warsaw; the wanderer from Bockharia celebrates here the Feast of the Passover, on the very spot of its first institution, with the travelling merchant of Morocco or Madrid. The denizen of "Old Jewry" beside the Thames shakes hands at this half-way house with his fellow-subject from the banks of the Ganges.

Although the Jew here is not at present so much oppressed as in the days of another Pharaoh, yet he inhabits the vilest quarter of the modern Necho's capital. The Sanhedrim of Mizraim has the disposing of at least eight cures for as many synagogues.

In passing one of these a few days since, I was tempted to enter, and, although there was nothing attractive either in the temple, its priests, or the ceremonies I beheld, yet I experienced some emotions of a very extraordinary nature. It was some Jewish festival of peculiar solemnity, I presume, for the exercises were conducted with more decorum and religious fervour than I had ever before seen in a similar place; and when the old gray-bearded patriarchal priest placed his hands upon the head of each one of the congregation as they passed before him, giving them his benediction, my mind instantly reverted to the times when their great lawgiver and his coadjutor, on this very spot or near it, blessed the multitude of oppressed Israel in like manner, previous to their retiring within the walls of their own domicils, there to slay the paschal lamb, "a lamb for a house," with its blood to sprinkle "the two side-posts and the upper door-post of the houses."

While I am now writing to you on the borders of the land of Goshen, where the institution of "the Lord's Passover" was first commanded to be observed by the chosen people of God, I cannot but feel how great is the privilege that I am permitted to enjoy, in walking over the very ground occupied by the dwellings so miraculously protected from the hand of the destroying angel, when he passed through the land of Egypt, slaying all the firstborn of man and beast. Were this institution one merely confined to the Jews, to be kept as a feast unto the Lord throughout all their generations, and as "an ordinance for ever and ever," that fact alone, with the singular circumstances attending its origin, would be sufficient to kindle up one's en-

thusiasm on the sacred spot where the holy rite was first impressed upon the minds and hearts of men. But when one, a Christian pilgrim to this land of miracles, the scene of so many divine manifestations, realizes in this peculiar ceremony the type of that subsequent institution, by which, after the death and resurrection of the Lamb of God, the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled on the portals of the hearts of each one of those who were strong in faith, protecting him from the snares of the destroying angel, who goes about seeking whom he may devour; such pilgrim, I say, should consider himself highly favoured in being thus permitted to drink at these sources from whence emanated, through trials and tribulations, that stream of life which, though hidden under the veil of mystery during the long dispensation of types and shadows, issued from thence at last into the bright light of the perfect day, when the sun of righteousness arose with healing in his wings.

How few of those who in our own holy temples see it dispensed by the priests of our pure religion, have had the privilege of partaking of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ on the very spot where his forerunner the paschal lamb was partaken of by their equals in faith, the broken-hearted Jews; yet even here there are a few followers of the Lamb of God, whose pastors in his name present the bread and wine, saying, "Take, eat, this is my body;" and of the cup, "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

The page which treats of Jewish reminiscences in this land of Goshen is a never-ending one, and, were I not to turn over the leaf, though your patience might not become exhausted with the interesting theme, yet my time would run out ere I could reach other matters on which I desire to touch in this epistle.

Two thousand Armenians have strayed to this remote

corner from the valleys of Ararat; and the lilies and the roses of the sons of Japhet are here seen vegetating side by side with the dusky-hued Semitic plants of Misraim. "The lilies toil not, neither do they spin;" but these over-zealous devotees of mammon, forgetting how much is worth "life more than meat, and the body than raiment," desert their own majestic mountains and Eden-like valleys, and come here to wallow in the mud of the Nile, braving pestilence and death; and all for what? for "filthy lucre," treasures upon earth which "moth and rust doth corrupt." Infatuated man! what wilt thou not forego, what dangers not face for gold! "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The same may be said of the Franks from the fields and plains of lovely Europe.

Of the "ten thousand Mamelukes" cited by our author, there now remains but one solitary individual; this "last of the Mohicans" is a gray-bearded old man, who, on the occasion of the slaughter of his race in the mountain citadel of Mohammed Ali, leaped his horse over the parapet wall down the tremendous precipice, and saved his life at the expense of that of his fine Arabian courser. He was afterward permitted to go at large by the sanguinary tyrant, who would have shot him down with his fellows had he not saved himself at the moment of massacre, by the extraordinary feat which he performed.

Of the "twelve thousand Africans," my author first cites the "negroes."

Now, as he has excluded all slaves from his enumeration, who are these same negroes? Why, they must be the slave-drivers and slave-agents of the bazars and caravans; those who catch the wilder children of Ham among the cane-brakes along the banks of the Niger, and in the jungles which border the great Lake Tchad; from thence driving them across the great desert which lies between Darfur and Fezzan to Sennaar. Those whose bones are not left to whiten

the broad desert, glide down with their masters on the bosom of the Yellow Nile, which is charged with the rich alluvion of their native plains, it and they alike are destined to fertilize the soil of the Delta, the former by being deposited on its surface, and the latter, very soon after, to be laid two feet below it. I do not think, however, that the number at the present day amounts to as many as is stated in the account I have quoted. The Nubians are those renegadoes who here crouch round the footstool of the conqueror of their cataract home; and the Ethiopians those who bring to Cairo, "to trade in her fairs," ostrich-feathers, gums, and ivory from Merawe, the Meroe of the Candaces. The Barabrahs are the Berbers of the Libyan desert and Mount Atlas, natives of what we call the "States of Barbary."

The twenty-one thousand Egyptians are the Fellahs of the Nile, the same as those whom the great emperor of cotton planters works to death among the long staple. Who the Mussulmans are, unless he means Turks and their descendants, I cannot conceive; the Arabs are, perhaps, the camel-drivers of the desert, who congregate here in the practice of their vocation.

This, then, is the catalogue of the motley group of citizens of the great Cahira, whose magnificence made "the prophet smile!" Cahira, the successor and devourer of the once stately Memphis!

What a poor apology, this, for the once proud capital of Misraim! and what complete desolation reigns over the site of old Misr! Only a few unopened mounds and one disinterred colossus indicate the spot where the greatest of all the Pharaohs held his court. In the time of Strabo, Memphis was still the queen city of Egypt. Even so late as the time of the crusades it was a noble city; and William of Tyre says, in writing from Babylon (old Cairo), that "about ten miles off, on the other side of the river, is seen a city stricken in years, of a vast extent, and in which one finds

numerous indications of an antique splendour and an imposing grandeur; and the inhabitants say positively that it is the ancient Memphis." The decadence of the ancient empire of Egypt dates from the time when the great high-priest of Vulcan, at Memphis, seized upon the reins of government, and united in his own person church and state, installing himself pontiff, like the successors of the Cæsars in the ancient Roman capital. Had not the armies of Sennacherib, who was marching against this weak government of Egypt, been cut off by a pestilence, the country of Sesostris would doubtless have earlier become a province of Assyria.

The day of her doom arrived at last, which was foretold by the prophet Isaiah: "Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt; and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt melt in the midst of it." The civil wars which devastated this country were also foretold. "And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom."

The invasion of Cambyses, and his conquest of Egypt, were thus foretold by the same prophet: "And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall reign over them, saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts."

Had the powerful Pharaohs of Egypt been content to enjoy their own legitimate dominions, which extended from the Mediterranean to the Mountains of the Moon, and from the Arabian Gulf to the great Sahara, who can say that the noble Memphis might not have been preserved down to our own day? But the demon spirit of conquest took possession of Egypt's pampered kings, who, not content with the overflowing wealth of their own dominions, coveted the treasures of their neighbours, the rich cities of Phœnicia, Tyre, and Sidon, which they succeeded in conquering, only to be

themselves afterward made to disgorge their ill-gotten plunder by a more powerful conqueror. But the final day of retribution was stayed yet a little while, until the rapacious tyrants of the Nile had overrun all Palestine and Syria quite to the Euphrates; Pharaoh Necho, determining upon the conquest of the world, like another Alexander or Napoleon, thus summoned all his hosts: "Harness the horses, and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth, with your helmets; furbish the spears, and put on the brigandines;" "Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and let the mighty men come forth, the Ethiopians and the Libyans that handle the shield; and the Libyans that handle and bend the bow." By the latter I presume were meant the foreign Greek mercenaries whom the Pharaohs called in to support them in their despotism. But the Lord had said, "Pharaoh, king of Egypt, is but a noise; he hath passed the time appointed;" also, "the daughter of Egypt shall be confounded; she shall be delivered into the hand of the people of the north." "For this is the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be made satiate and drunk with their blood: for the Lord God of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates."

"Oh, thou daughter of Egypt, furnish thyself to go into captivity, for Noph (Memphis) shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant." These were the denunciations of the prophet "against Egypt, against the armies of Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates, in Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah."

Thus was the power of Egypt broken; and if afterward, under her Ptolemies, supported by her foreign Greek allies, she had a revival of her former splendour, it was but transitory; Memphis never regained what she had lost by in-

vasion; and her temples being overthrown, their more beautiful fragments were carried to the maritime capital, leaving the grosser materials to be appropriated by the Arabian conqueror to the construction of fanes dedicated to what he called a reformed religion.

There appears to be a faint parallel between the ancient Pharaoh and the one who now sways the sceptre of Misraim. The latter also has a thirst for foreign conquest; he, like his prototype, has already subjugated all Ethiopia, Libya, and part of Arabia, and has lately overrun Palestine and Syria. This last conquest was to satisfy his rapacious desire for plunder; and though the treasures of Tyre and Sidon no longer excite the cupidity of the invader, and the gold of the temple of the Lord has long since disappeared, yet the "golden fleece of Serica" yields a rich and tempting crop on the plains of Syria, the shores of Phœnicia present commodious harbours for his fleets, and the mountains of Lebanon yield timber wherewithal to construct his navies. He has even pushed his conquests to the great river, and his heir apparent has made a gallant foray to the very gates of the modern Babylon of the East. The time, perhaps, is not far distant, when he or his heir may also stumble and fall towards the north by the river Euphrates, when the modern Nebuchadnezzar of the far north shall be ready to put on the "buckler and shield, and draw near to battle" to accomplish his long-premeditated conquest of Islam.

These last reflections remind me of some remarks now in my portfolio, written by my husband to a friend of his, on the present affairs and future prospects of the East. I will take the liberty to make a long extract from these speculations, not so much for your amusement as to gratify the inquiring curiosity of your friend, Mr. ——, for Oriental politics.

"India," he says, "is, in fact, the real magnet towards which the Russian steel is silently approximating; and al-

though its north pole may for a time exert its repellant powers, and keep at bay the ponderous mass, yet, when the distance which now intervenes between them shall be imperceptibly diminished, the gravitation of the heavier body will give it increased momentum, and to its accelerated velocity not even the cloud-capped Himalaya will present the slightest resistance. Russian diplomacy is as bold in its conceptions as it is secret in its designs; its motto is *ars est celare artem;* and the feints which it has frequently made, and is now making, in the meridian of the imbecile Turkish empire, are but so many tricks thrown out *ad captandum vulgus.* While the pigmy diplomats of the West are 'settling the affairs of the East' through the dragomanerie of Pera, the pensioners of the Autocrat, the latter (as we say of the wily Scot) is 'coming North over' the whole of them by means of his finished graduates from the school of Catharine. When Nicolai shall have outwitted the statesmen of Britain and the sages of Gaul, he will then be entitled to repeat the exclamation of the empress conqueror, '*N'ai je pas bien joué mon role?*'

"From what I have seen of the power of Russia, I am confident she could, at any moment she pleased, seize upon the key of the Euxine gates, and close them against the combined efforts of all the West, and hold them, too, in spite of all the navies in existence. What though Britain should blockade the Baltic, and prevent the egress of the products of the Wolga—which would be the most *gêné*, herself deprived of those necessary productions, or the producers losing their sales? Even though British emissaries should excite discontent, and stimulate disaffection or revolt among the agricultural Boyards, at the first symptoms of outbreak Siberia would be their portion. Would Russia and her commerce remain long shut up? No! she would walk over Sweden, and establish herself on the coasts of the North Sea, as she intends yet to do when her Eastern projects shall be

accomplished. I take it for granted, then, that the Czar has nothing to fear in the North. There is Poland, you say, which is ready at any time to rise.

"It would be but a small affair to transfer her population to the banks of the Boristhenes, and replace them with the peasantry of the Wolga, as was the practice with ancient nations. Or, should the Czar be hard pressed, why, he could afford to throw away the whole territory, by partitioning it between Prussia and Austria, in order to purchase their neutrality; and, should the latter require a higher bribe, there are the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia which Russia could guaranty to her—then let England and France do their worst.

"Should matters at any time come to a sudden issue, the course of Russia would be just what I have now stated; but her policy is not to provoke open hostility with the western maritime nations, nor yet to avoid it if necessary to carry out her darling purpose, the conquest of India. Unless some more decided measures be soon taken by England and France conjointly, Russia will have obtained so firm a foothold in Persia and Kurdistan, that the Punjab will offer but a faint resistance to her arms and wiles. Then the Euphrates and Indus will be as free for her myriads as they were for those of Timurlane and Genghis Khan. I have somewhere seen a very scientific calculation made, that, owing to the natural obstacles which lie between Russia and India to the east of the Caspian, no army could find subsistence, and the vast *materiel* required for a distant conquest could not be transported across the mountains which intersect the route. These sapient calculators forget the march of Alexander the Great from Macedon to India, and his triumphant return across the desert; or the famous retreat of the ten thousand under Xenophon.

"Did the Alps arrest the march of Hannibal or the progress of Napoleon? What, then, should prevent the Mus-

covite from surmounting similar obstacles in Asia? You may ask, Why, then, does not Russia crush at a blow the handful of turbulent mountaineers of the Caucasus? Were she to do this, she would have no excuse to keep up navies in the Euxine and a war establishment about the Caspian. The policy of Russia is deep, and her ways past finding out.

"Whence comes it that we have seen the downward course of the Osmanlies' empire urged on at least half a century in one day, and by a single naval fight their power for ever annihilated? From Russian diplomacy! Russia could not venture upon her great eastern scheme, having so powerful and treacherous a neighbour as the Turk, without first weakening his power, and securing his good faith through fear.

"Thus did she plan and execute her purpose against the Turk. First, through the instrumentality of her own Greek priesthood, did Russia excite the Greek provinces of Turkey to revolt, and then, when victory seemed to favour the arms of Greece, she lent secret aid to the Turk, inciting him to use the most cruel measures in the barbarous warfare, until the people of Christendom, indignant at the bloody massacres which attended the Turkish arms, compelled their governments to combine for the rescue of fallen Greece from her cruel oppressor. Then Russian diplomacy again supplied an army of phil-Hellenes from out of all the nations of Europe, which, when it reached Greece, was met by Turkish arms supported by Russian gold. The repeated defeats of the chivalry of Europe excited the sympathies of all the western nations; and such was the clamour against the Turks, that the combined fleets of the most powerful maritime nations were ordered to exterminate the navies of Mahmoud, and the day of Navarino caused the crescent to fall before the triumphant cross. Thus Russian diplomacy succeeded, and the Euxine became her own exclusive domain, while the weakened Turk could offer no resistance to the

new acquisition of territory which the Muscovite made from his borders. If Russia desired then to possess herself of Constantinople, what prevented her? Not the prostrate Turk, nor the menaces of Britain. Still, however, the Empire of Osman was too strong to suit the views of the cabinet of the Czars. Russian emissaries taught the Egyptian his own strength, and incited him to use it for the advancement of his own interest. The veterans of the Morea, after fighting the battles of the sultan, turned their arms against him, and in a few months were thundering at the gates of Stamboul; and the affrighted Turk threw himself into the arms of the Czar for protection. It was no part of the Russian policy to have an ambitious and successful young conqueror on the throne of the Osmanlies; and Nicholas could well afford then to play the magnifico, and lend his friend Mahmoud a few brigades of Muscovites to repel the invader.

"The results of this friendly interference on the part of the Czar were a certain treaty and promised indemnification from the sultan, although the latter he meant never to pay if he could avoid it. The Egyptian once more beyond the Taurus, the Turk forgot his pledges. Was it to enforce the treaty that Diebitsch was sent, or was it not rather a good excuse to explore the passes of the Balkan for future uses? Some pretend to say that, when Russia held possession of Adrianople, she was awed from making farther advances upon Stamboul by the upraised finger of England's minister; while others declare that Mahmoud threatened the life of every Frank in Pera if Diebitsch moved another step towards his capital. Russia had accomplished her purpose; she had prostrated Turkey, and therefore made a merit of magnanimously sparing a fallen foe. The seeds of discord have taken too deep root in the great empire of Islam for all the diplomacy of the West ever to eradicate them; and all its members are too much disjointed for England to suc-

ceed in reconstructing a powerful empire on the ruins of the one she (so foolishly for herself) assisted in overturning. While the nations of Europe are engaged in diplomatizing on the hill of Pera, alternately cajoled by the Turk and deceived by the Russ, the latter is training his million of troops on the plains of Muscovie, to be prepared against the moment when the decisive blow is to be struck for the empire of the East.

"This is the view which I take of the present state of affairs in the East; the result, perhaps, of a superficial and hasty observation; yet it requires but a glance to see that the pretended threatening of Turkey is but a by-play of Russia to amuse England, while the Czar is stealing silently into the hearts and councils of the nations of central Asia. The great wonder is, that, ere it be too late, England does not seize upon Turkey in Europe, and portion off the remainder of the empire to satisfy the cupidity of the other nations, who, while they affect to assist her in propping up the crumbling throne of Turkey, are but thwarting her vital interest in the East. The petty jealousies of the western powers give strength to Russia. England is the only nation that has the most important stake in this great game, which she bids fair to lose through a mistaken policy.

"As for the Turk, he is at best but a usurper in Europe, and there would be no crime in unseating him by any of the powers. The same may be said of him who ruffianly lords it over the land from the Nile to the Euphrates. Why, then, do the western powers hesitate? Instead of dividing the spoil between them, and leaving England to cope with the Russians on the plains of Persia, they are striving each to out-general the other in the royal game of diplomacy, when all of them collectively are not a match for Russia in craft and cunning. It would then appear that England's possessions in India are in imminent danger from the power of Russia, aided by her superior diplomacy. If you take

any interest in these grand movements of the nations, you will, perhaps, be speculating upon their probable results; for the leading features of such vast and important manœuvres can be as well observed from another hemisphere as from a point nearer to the scene of action, perhaps better. I too sometimes find myself absorbed in conjectures and calculations upon the future; but can never come to any satisfactory result in my own mind, nor find a clew to this labyrinth of dark diplomacy. Vexed at not being able to unravel the mystery on which the fate of Asia depends, I would fain, like Alexander, cut the knot of Gordius were it in my power; but, if I cannot erect empires in Asia, I can at least build *chateaux en Espagne;* therefore, if your patience will permit you to follow me, I will now carve up the East, and give to each hungry expectant such a share of it as I think would be most conducive to his own good; after which I will settle the future constitution of Asia as 'I understand it,' and execute the laws on Russian aggression according to its merits.

"As John Bull is a testy old fellow, and, withal, very much given to be dogmatical in matters touching his interest, he requires some one to coax him into good-humour whenever he is chafed at the pretensions of his warm-blooded neighbour across the channel. John, in the main, is as magnanimous as his next-door neighbour is chivalrous; but old feuds and family pride prevent them from coming to a right understanding upon points involving important interests of each; and on the least disagreement in matters of shillings and francs, John grasps his cudgel and stands upon his dignity, while his neighbour puts his hand to his sword and talks of *honneur*. Mutual respect for the *bienséances* of civilized life obliges them to go about any matter of out-door business, in which they may be both concerned, with an apparent cordiality of feeling towards each other; but, whenever they get fairly to work upon knotty questions, there is

always some interested one ready to mar the transient harmony; and you will see him alternately putting John in mind of his dignity, and the other of his honour, until each makes a polite bow to the other, and goes about his own affairs, leaving the mutual interest for ever unsettled. In former times, these two proud heads of rival families were very apt to give each other hard knocks on the most trivial occasions, until they finally drubbed one another into good behaviour, and respect for each other's rights. Although John's temper has softened down a little, and his bearing towards his neighbour become less dogmatical, yet he can never so far forgive past insults or forget old grudges as to permit himself to go hand in hand with him for any length of time in the most important affair. Monsieur's head is so full of his antique notions of *honneur*, that he can never agree with John for fear of compromising it; even in matters where the interest of his house is deeply involved. Therefore, unless I, who am a friend to both, should step in between them, neither, I am afraid, will ever get a share of the Eastern banquet which has been so long waiting their pleasure.

"It is very evident that, with a proper understanding, and mutual concession and good feeling, England and France could, without much effort, settle the affairs of the East entirely according to their own views, and divide the empire of Turkey between them. But, as this is not likely to take place soon enough to suit me, I will undertake to do it for them. First, then, as a preliminary, I would guaranty to France all the southern coast of the Mediterranean, from Morocco to the borders of Egypt, with the privilege of making conquests as far into the interior of Africa as she might choose, always excepting the Atlantic coasts. Egypt should be England's, with the right to carry her arms to the Cape of Good Hope. Syria should go to France, as far as the Euphrates on the east and the Taurus on the north. Asia

Minor to England, with the right to march to Bucharia if she saw fit. Turkey in Europe—ah, there's the rub; Austria must have something to say about that. Well, then, give her the fine provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia, with a slice of Bessarabia along the Danube, and a right to a free navigation through the Dardanelles for ever. Perhaps she might not be satisfied with so small a share of the spoil; then give her the territory under the decayed old dominion of the pope.

"As a check upon Austria and Russia, re-erect the throne of Paleologus on the hills of Byzantium, and call a Cantacuzene to fill it. Send back to his father the Bavarian boy, and let the new empire of Greece extend from the Euxine to the Adriatic, and from the Balkan to Cape Colonna.

"Under a native sovereign, and with territory enough to make a respectable empire, Greece would attain a proper degree of eminence among the nations.

"As for the Turks, from Constantinople to Cairo, they should be politely escorted across the Euphrates, and there permitted to reconstruct an empire on the former territory of the califs, making old Bagdad's walls once more resound with the glories of Haroun al Raschid.

"There is no one who could have the slightest objection to this arrangement except the Czar; nor would he, were I to guaranty to him a free passage to India. This, however, England forbids, and so does the universal voice of all the nations of the world. This huge colossus already strides across from the Atlantic waters to the China Sea; he must not be permitted to plant his foot upon the shores of the Indian Ocean. How prevent it? you ask. Why, easily, provided it be done before his million of raw recruits shall become veterans, under the great general Nicolai Paulovich.

"The moment the preliminaries were settled in secret conclave, I would direct England to make a combined movement upon Persia from three separate points. By way of

the Indus from Hindostan; next, by way of Syria and the Euphrates; and, lastly, by way of the Black Sea by Trebizonde. Persia once secured and kept under surveillance, neither could she ally herself to Russia, nor could the Czar and the sultan combine. This outpost well intrenched, England should push to Bucharia, and her army, that would occupy the Punjab by way of Bengal, should communicate with that of Bucharia and Persia, thus surrounding the new calif, and preventing him from communicating with the Moslems of Hindostan. Simultaneously with these movements, England and France should take quiet possession of their respective portions of the Turkish spoils, and, at the same time, assist the new Greek emperor to ascend his throne.

"We will suppose all these matters to have been settled for a century, and now let us pay a visit to each of the new viceroyalties of the East.

"Suppose we enter the Pillars of Hercules: we there have on our right the regenerated empire of Carthage, and farther on we come to the capital itself, an epitome of Paris. Riding back among the valleys of the Atlas, we find the fierce descendants of the ancient Numidians become quiet French *paysans*, cultivating the olive and vine. We land at Alexandria, and find its ports enlarged and crowded with shipping of every nation; its quays filled with British merchandise and the cotton of the Nile.

"Rows of warehouses, like those of Liverpool or Glasgow, from the Pillar of Pompey to Cleopatra's Needle, with streets and squares to Lake Mareotis.

"The canal enlarged and filled with steamers, instead of the oldfashioned kanjees of the Nile, requiring four or five days to make the voyage to Cairo. The steamers now make the trip every day, each way, between sun and sun. Their saloons are filled with travellers to and from India and China, and tourists who ten days previous were prome-

nading in Hyde Park or the gardens of the Tuileries, and who in ten days hence will be in Abyssinia.

'Go where we may, rest where we will,
Eternal London haunts us still.
The trash of Almack's or Fleet Ditch,
And scarce a pin's head difference *which*,
Mixes, though even to Greece we run,
With every rill from Helicon!
And if this rage for travelling lasts,
If Cockneys of all sects and castes,
Old maidens, aldermen, and squires,
Will leave their puddings and coal fires
To gape at things in foreign lands
No soul among them understands;
If blues desert their coteries
To show off 'mong the Wahabees;
If neither sex nor age controls,
Nor fear of Mamelukes forbids
Young ladies, with pink parasols,
To glide among the Pyramids:
Why, then, farewell all hope to find
A spot that's free from London kind!
Who knows, if to the West we roam,
But we may find some *blue* "at home,"
Among the *blacks* of Carolina;
Or, flying to the Eastward, see
Some Mrs. Hopkins taking tea
And toast upon the wall of China!'

"Cairo has her London Coffee-house and Mivart's Hotel, her opera-house and theatres. The Pyramids are all cleared of the rubbish which formerly surrounded them, and an agreeable hotel is situated in a palm and acacia grove at their base, while on the summit of the tomb of Cheops is erected a kiosk, in which one can pass the day among pipes, coffee, and cool sherbets; when desirous of returning to Cairo, one is launched down from the *Montagne Russe* of Egypt with the velocity of lightning; and the impetus received by the rapid descent carries the flying car quite over the plain to the gates of the city. The outward trip is made by a fancy railroad to the summit of the Pyramid

in twenty minutes, and back again in five. Ascending the Nile by steam, the eye rests on the beautiful banks of the river, lined with neat villages and the white cottages of the English peasantry. The old canals of the Pharaohs have all been reopened, and others made, so that every acre of ground receives its portion of the fertilizing flood. Windmills and steam-engines are continually raising the water during the low stages of the river, causing the oft-repeated crops to return a hundred fold of the treasure committed to earth's bosom. The sands which had swallowed up a third part of Egypt are now converted into green pastures, and the desert is made to 'blossom as the rose.' Tentyra has been cleared of its rubbish and entirely restored; its nave is now used as a Christian temple. The plain of Thebes is converted into a garden, and its ancient temples now serve as colleges, whose cloisters are filled with students from every quarter of the East, and this seat of science annually sends forth its hundreds of 'learned Thebans.'

"The stone quarries of Silsili and the granite mountains of Syene are again resounding with the hammer and chisel. Magnificent locks now lift the ponderous steamer gayly over the rapids. Philæ's island-temple is once more a commercial entrepot, while the caverned fanes of Nubia have become places of Christian worship. Meroe is fast resuming the ancient splendour enjoyed under Candace. From Cairo a locomotive takes the traveller in four hours to Suez, whence another whirls him across the desert to the new city of Zion, where, on the site of the temple of Solomon, stands a modern cathedral: or a daily steamer transports him from Alexandria to Cesarea, whose modern port outrivals that of Herod. *Chaussées* intersect the whole hill country, and a railway stretches from Acre across the plains of Esdraelon, and up by Damascus to the Euphrates; where a steamer is in waiting for the Mussulman returning from Paris to his home at Bagdad. The whole Lebanon chain is now a

mulberry-grove, and its golden productions are steamed over to Lyons for the use of her looms.

"Throughout all the Holy Land the sacred monuments are surrounded by thousands of pilgrims from the farthest west; and the pious female devotee returning to her home, nourishes her roses of Sharon with the water of Jordan. The descendant of Ishmael now visits in peace the bazars of Cairo and Damascus, and his hand is no longer against every man, nor every man's hand against him. Old Phœnicia again boasts of her Tyre and Sidon, fast rising into their ancient splendour, and Palmyra has again become the half-way house to the 'great river.'

"Instead of coasting round Asia Minor, let us take the direct route to the capital of Constantine the Second, across the new colony of Britain.

"Landing at the fine port of Tarsus, we enter the steam-car, and in a few hours we will clear the romantic passes of the Taurus, and enter upon the vast plain of which Koniah (Iconium) is the chief city. This immense region is now cultivated by the English farmer, and the ever-increasing treasures of its granaries replace those of the Boristhenes.

"Grand routes intersect each other over the whole face of Asia Minor, and it can no longer be said geographically that 'two thirds of the country is a desert.' 'The seven golden candlesticks of Asia' are once more filled with the living light of the gospel truth, which now illumines the whole land, and the watchtowers of the Christian faith crown the height of the Taurus from the Ægean to Ararat. Armenia, that cradle of the human race, once more teems with a busy population, skilled in all the arts and sciences, and who have been brought to acknowledge the true doctrine of the cross as preached by the apostles of Christ. The plain of Babylonia, under its modern Sardanapalus, though teeming with its former luxuriance, still beholds those repeated

political convulsions which ever attend the intriguing of a seraglio cabinet.

"Persia, under the tutelage of Britain, is fast regaining the political importance she once enjoyed through her Xerxes; and the warlike sons of Pontus stand as a proud bulwark against the northern hordes as erst they did under their Mithridates. How stands it with the throne of the Cæsars? The seven-hilled city no longer presents a mass of wooden shantees crouching round their stately mosques, but ample streets and splendid squares are bordered with palaces, and her broad quays have a continuous line of tall warehouses, from which ships of every nation are receiving cargoes of Oriental products.

"The Golden Horn pours forth its fruits and flowers, while the valley of the Sweet Waters is redolent with their perfume.

"The holy fane of St. Sophia is once more surmounted with the cross, and her sister churches crown every hill.

"The Euxine is covered with the navies of Greece, to protect her argosies and her coasts. While the strife of politics and the ambition of statesmen are confined to Byzantium, the halls of Athens only exhibit the emulation of the student and the intellectual contests in the arena of science; and from the *Columbian Institute* issue forth the future statesmen and theologists of Greece.

"The once half-deserted islands of the Archipelago are now teeming with life. 'The vine-robed hills of health' yield their abundant produce, and the valleys the olive and fig. Thus bread, wine, and oil, the staple commodities, are abundantly supplied. The quarries of Paros are again in action, and future Parthenons, issuing thence, shall ornament every acropolis from the Cape of Leucadia to the Dardan shore. Lastly, we now see the 'Roman emperor' of the Danube alternately occupying his two palaces, Schoenbrun and the Vatican.

"We very naturally ask, what will Russia be about all this while?

"Arrested in its southern course, the torrent of her increasing power will be turned eastward, and, ere another century has rolled round, we may see her fourth capital within the walls of Pekin.

"In several of my late letters I have given you some idea of the degraded and often convulsed state of the Eastern world, and I now call your attention to the important and beneficial changes which might result from the subjugation of these regions to the rule of Western nations; after which, ponder on the sketch I have here drawn; 'look on that picture and then on this;' and say if you do not agree with me in desiring a political crusade against the Moslem usurpers.

"It is not a very difficult matter to divine what is to be the political state of the East for a few years to come.

"Sultan Mahmoud will go on reforming till he is reformed out of the world himself by the poisoned chalice, administered either at the instance of the jealous priesthood, or that of his proud vassal of Egypt.

"Mohammed Ali's life would not be worth the trouble it would cost the sultan to take it, for his successor, Ibrahim Pacha, would prove a less manageable subject, because of his possessing an equal degree of boldness with the present pacha, and less of the political tact which keeps the latter within the pale of prudence. Although the sovereign *de facto* of Egypt and Syria, yet Mohammed Ali will continue to acknowledge the supremacy of Mahmoud as long as he is left in possession of Egypt, and can control for his own uses the revenues and trade of Syria. The death of either of these two great champions would be the signal for some great change. Should the Pacha of Egypt be the first taken off, Ibrahim's impetuosity would cause him to demand of the sultan an immediate recognition of his hereditary right to

Egypt and Syria; and, in case this should be refused him, he would march again direct to Stamboul, spite of all the peace missions of the timid Western nations. Should the Sultan Mahmoud's life go suddenly in any revolution or conspiracy at home, the sovereign right of Mohammed Ali and his successors for ever to Egypt and Syria would follow as a matter of course, and be sustained by them as long as Moslem rule is to be tolerated in these regions. So far as the mass of the degraded population is concerned, it matters little whether they have a single tyrant of their own, or a host of petty pachas and agas, equally tyrannical, inflicted on them from Stamboul. If there be any choice, it should be in favour of Mohammed Ali; for political necessities require him to call about his person intelligent and active men from Europe, whose presence is a real benefit to the country. There is one thing, however, so very evident, 'that he who runs may read' it throughout all Islam, and that is, that Mohammedanism, in its rapid decline, is pulling down with it every country in which it predominates, and the time is almost present when the lowest point must be reached, and the scale turn again in favour of these distressed countries; but then the dominion of Mohammedan law must 'kick the beam' ere that change can come."

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I must cut short my quotation of these political disquisitions, and should have done it before had I been catering for your taste alone; yet, while engaged in making the transcript, my mind has been drawn by these speculations on the probable state of Egypt a century hence, should it come under English rule, to the consideration of the remarkable state of civilization it enjoyed in a time of such very high antiquity, and during such a long succession of centuries. What a curious problem is this to solve, and how the mind is lost in wonder when endeavouring to lift the veil of oblivion which enshrouds the early history of Egypt. All the

efforts of the most acute minds, assisted by the historical lore of all the schools, can furnish nothing beyond conjecture on the point to which I would call your attention.

Egypt attained her highest point of civilization and magnificence eighteen hundred years before the Christian era; that is, three thousand six hundred years ago! The length of her brilliant era was six hundred years. For twelve hundred years she was declining, yet was still a great nation at the birth of Christ. The decline of a great empire is generally more rapid than its rise to the zenith of its greatness. This is, then, the problem I would propose for philosophers to solve. If Egypt, at the birth of Christ, had been twelve hundred years on the decline, after enjoying six hundred years of meridian splendour, how many centuries must we go back to find the point of departure from which began her extraordinary career? The time can only be approached by the following hypothesis. If we suppose only an equal length of time for her rise to that of her decline, and up to her final absorption into the universal Roman empire, about the commencement of our era, then we have twelve hundred years to count back from the point of time when she first reached her zenith, eighteen centuries before our era; the result gives the astonishing fact that the incipient state of civilization on the banks of the Nile dates four thousand eight hundred years back from the century in which we live. The figures by which this wonderful result is obtained are no fictions, but are well ascertained facts, proved by numerous concurrent testimonies; facts "which it has been too long the fashion to consign to mysticism and fable." Abraham visited Egypt about two thousand and seventy-seven years before the birth of Christ, say three thousand nine hundred years ago. Joseph was appointed "ruler over all the land of Egypt" eighteen hundred and seventy-two years B.C.: and as Joseph resided at Memphis, which was at first only a colony from the older Thebes, how much more ancient must the latter have been than Memphis?

The rise of Egypt must have been more rapid than the time I have allowed to it in my supposition, else the result I have arrived at would bring me upon dangerous ground, according to the Mosaic account of the deluge.

I will pursue this subject no farther, for I am lost in amazement when I consider that the vast pyramid of Cheops, which is now before me, was actually built three thousand eight hundred years ago, a simple monument in the grave-yard of Memphis !!

I am still detained within doors by the causes I explained to you yesterday, which enables me to add a few more lines to this epistle, the last I shall ever have it in my power to indite to you from the land of Egypt.

Notwithstanding many privations and some positive discomforts experienced since my arrival in this country, I cannot but feel some regret at leaving it so soon; for, although one may be able in after time to follow up in one's own closet the history of this most extraordinary of all the countries of the world, yet such studies can never be pursued to so much advantage as when the eternal monuments are continually before one's eyes.

Doctor Clarke, in commenting on the importance of Egyptian antiquities, says, "In many respects Egypt has long appeared to the scholar, the antiquary, and the philosopher the most interesting country on the face of the earth. Relatively to the various tribes who at successive eras have founded states westward of the Black Sea and the Syrian desert, it has been universally regarded as the cradle of science, as well as the first seat of regular government; and hence we find that even the polished nations of modern Europe are accustomed to ascribe the rudiments of their literature and arts to the ingenious people who, at a period beyond the records of civil history, occupied the banks of the Nile. It requires even a great effort of imagination to combine the ideas of the magnificence and power which

must have distinguished the epoch when Thebes was built, and the splendid monuments of her kings were erected, with the facts which meet the view of the traveller in our own days amid the devastation of Carnac and the ruins of Luxor. The land of the Pharaohs, in truth, was an old country in the infant age of Greece.

"The earliest writers of Europe described its grandeur as having already reached its consummation, and even as beginning to pass away, while the philosophers and historians who crossed the Mediterranean in search of knowledge, were astonished at the proof of an antiquity which surpassed all their notions of recorded time, and at the tokens of a wisdom, genius, and opulence of which they could hardly hope that their countrymen would believe their description. In the days of Homer, the capital of the Thebaid, with its hundred gates and vast population, was a subject of wonder and the most exalted panegyric; an effect which we should at once attribute to the exaggeration of the poet, were it not that the remains which, even after the lapse of three thousand years, continue to resist the injuries of the atmosphere and of barbarism, bear evidence of a still greater magnificence than is recorded in the pages of the Odyssey."

Long before coming to Egypt I had read all that has been said of it by old Herodotus and sung by Homer, and had also studied, among many other modern authors, Doctor Clarke; yet I could scarcely bring myself to believe that many things said by them respecting the existent monuments of this country were not "the exaggeration of the poet" and the fancy sketches of the traveller. The few short months which superficial tourists devote to the contemplation of Egypt, are merely sufficient to convince them that the half has not been told respecting the "world's great wonder on the Egyptian plain;" and, as I am one of this class of travellers, I find that all I have been able to accomplish in a quarter of a year on the banks of the Nile, after

first making a willing sacrifice of my early incredulity at the shrines of Memphis, and acknowledging the fidelity of the narrations of previous travellers touching the leading features of the wonderful picture before me, has been hastily to observe and note down the hundreds of minor, though not less interesting and astonishing details, of which I was totally ignorant before I had seen them. For one who has the taste and leisure to pursue this inexhaustible subject, the notes collected during a three months' tour in Egypt would afford subject matter for study and contemplation during the remainder of a long life, by directing his attention to the works of authors previously considered by him as only appertaining to the province of the antiquary, the archaiologist, and the philosopher, and opening new channels hitherto unknown to him.

To one who is desirous of arriving at the truth, so far as it can be ascertained, respecting the early stages of Egyptian history, and thereon to form the basis of future studies, it is a great satisfaction to find so many testimonies in the works of succeeding writers which agree in establishing the general truth of the extraordinary statements left on record by Herodotus. With such a sure foundation, and with the ample materials ready fashioned for use by such master minds as Champoillon, Heeren, and others of the same class, very little labour, though much time, might be required to erect for one's self a temple of knowledge, the bright flame of whose altar would illumine a circle equal to the whole horizon of history: then, from the summit of such a fabric as this, the eye could range at pleasure over the broad expanse, with a view unobstructed by those immediate objects which tower round, and absorb one's whole attention in the ordinary walks of life.

The mere history of the inhabitants along the banks of the Nile, from the time when we first hear of them in Ethiopia down to the last death-knell of the empire of

Egypt, sounded by the victorious Amru over the Arabian hills, wonderful and extraordinary as it is in itself, must only be considered as the mere pivot on which turns the whole circle of historical events, from the erection of the first altar on the Mount of Ararat, to the last recorded incident on the page of history. How much of the history of our race is connected with the annals of Egypt, from the day when the father of the chosen people of God first descended into it from the hills of Palestine, to the time when the carpenter of Nazareth here sought refuge, and the future Saviour of the world was hidden from those who sought his life. The whole intervening period was fraught with the most astonishing manifestations of God's displeasure towards the sinful and degenerate race, spread over the whole face of the eastern world, from Chaldea to the Thebaid, on every page of whose history is written, in letters of blood, some awful denunciation of the great Jehovah, of which succeeding pages record the terrible fulfilment.

Passing from the contemplation of these events in Egyptian history, so intimately connected with that of the Old Testament dispensation, our attention is next directed to the wide-spreading of the doctrines of the new dispensation throughout Egypt and Ethiopia, and the erring course of those fanatics who adopted the new faith, fleeing in thousands to the desert of Libya, and to the caverned tombs of Upper Egypt; there to pass a life of anchorite seclusion from the world, mortifying the flesh in order to be the more certain of saving the soul: and finally driven from their haunts by a more savage, yet scarcely less erring order of religious zealots, under the banner of a new prophet. Thus, in a religious point of view, we have seen Egypt successively passing from idolatry to Christianity and monachism, and thence to infidelity.

In her civil and political history, what an important influence we see her exerting on barbarous and benighted Europe.

Infant Greece acknowledging her for its foster-mother, and the later Rome disdaining not to imitate many of her institutions or to copy many of her monuments; while more modern Europe found the type of her magnificent cathedrals among the ruins of Carnac, and the philosophers of a nearer day drew from the idolatrous fanes of the Nile the mystical zodiac, whereby to poison the minds of the Christian world, and to shake its confidence in the revelations of the Deity. This allusion to the zodiac of Dendera reminds me of a passage in Volney, in which he overturns at a blow the whole Mosaical account of the creation, the deluge, &c., through the evidence of the star-worship of Egypt and Chaldea. "Should it be asked," says the French philosopher, "at what epoch this system (Sabeism) took its birth, we shall answer, supported by the authority of the monuments of astronomy itself, that its principles can be traced back with certainty to a period of nearly seventeen thousand years. Should we be asked to what people or nation it ought to be attributed, we shall reply that those selfsame monuments, seconded by unanimous tradition, ascribe it to the first tribes of Egypt." In another part of his extraordinary work he pretends to prove, by the astrological map of the celestial sphere, that the whole history of the fall of man, "a great mediator, a final judge, a future Saviour," is but a plagiarism upon the systems of Zoroaster, and very ingeniously endeavours to show, from the sacred books of the Chaldeans, that the doctrine of original transgression, the mediation and atonement of Christ, his death, resurrection, and ascension, is but a travestie of the astrological drama, in twelve acts, as performed on the zodiacal stage of Sabeism. After showing the parallel between the Chaldean traditions of the conflicts of the celestial performers, in the heroic farce of the four seasons, and the Jewish account of the fall of man, he pretends to quote from the same source this account of the Saviour: "That in his infancy this re-

storer of the divine or celestial nature would lead a mean, humble, obscure, and indigent life," "by which is meant," says Volney, "that the winter sun was humbled, depressed below the horizon, and that this first period of his four ages, or the seasons, was a period of obscurity, indigence, fasting, and privation." Again of the Saviour, "that, being put to death by the wicked, he would gloriously rise again, ascend from hell into heaven, where he would reign for ever." "By these expressions," he says, "was described the life of the same sun, who, terminating his career at the winter solstice, when Typhon and the rebellious angels exercised their sway, seemed to be put to death by them; but shortly after revived and rose again in the firmament, where he still remains."

"These traditions went still farther, specifying his astrological and mysterious names, maintaining that he (the sun) was called *Chris* (conservator), and hence the Hindoo god *Chrisen* or *Christna;* and the Christian *Christos*, the son of Mary. That at other times he was called *Yès*, by the union of three letters, which, according to their numerical value, form the number six hundred and eighty, one of the solar periods. And behold, oh Europeans, the name which, with a Latin termination, has become your *Yes-us* or *Jesus*."

Thus does this self-deluded sophist ransack the whole arcana of heathen delusions, in order to eclipse the "sun of righteousness," which rose over a benighted world with healing in his wings, interposing between him and fallen man a portion of mere creation, the transitory light of which serves only to guide his mortal footsteps, while the dark shadows of the grave obscure the path to the "realms of day" "eternal in the heavens." This able and accomplished infidel writer, by his great research and intimate acquaintance with all the various astrological, mythological, and theological systems of every people under the canopy of heaven, would have done less harm and much more good to mankind, of

whom he affects to be the friend, had he exerted his remarkable talents to sustain the cause he has so strenuously endeavoured to pull down, that he might triumph over its "ruins."

The temples of Chaldea have long since been swept from the face of the earth by the besom of destruction, and their foundations are now as "heaps" amid the fens of Euphrates and Tigris; and it would appear that the Deity, indignant at man's leaving a trace of Egypt's sculptured blasphemies, had directed against them the sands of the desert, that the dust of the earth might bury these abominations for ever in oblivion. But restless, inquisitive man has "digged into the wall," and brought again to the light of day "every form of creeping things and abominable beasts portrayed" there, in order to mystify his fellow-men, and turn them away from the light of truth. A more auspicious era has dawned upon the world than that in which flourished the author of the "Ruins," and the light of science now only penetrates the labyrinth of Nile's caverned temples to illumine the obscured pages of history.

Fully persuaded as I am of the strength of your faith in our holy religion, and of the capability of your judgment to discriminate between good and evil in the metaphysical abstractions of philosophy, I would not withhold from you these harmless effusions of the infidel; for, if read in a proper spirit, they interest, instruct, and expose the weakness of philosophy.

But even he who is almost persuaded to be an infidel by the poetical blandishments of Volney, must already have been deeply tinctured with the spirit of the fallen angel, if, when the following passage in the "Ruins" comes before his eyes, they are not opened to the fallacy of the "rudiments of the world" as taught in these "lessons." After one of the most beautiful apostrophes to the Deity I ever read, the author of the Ruins addresses himself to man

(through one of his actors), and if an infidel was never before, by his own words, condemned, then he is the first; but hear him:

"Sovereign and mysterious power of the universe! Secret mover of nature! Universal soul of everything that lives! Infinite and incomprehensible Being, whom, under so many forms, mortals have ignorantly worshipped! God, who in the immensity of the heavens dost guide revolving worlds, and people the abyss of space with millions of suns: say, what appearance do those human insects, which I can with difficulty distinguish upon the earth, make in thy eyes?

"When thou directest the stars in their orbits, what to thee are the worms that crawl in the dust? Of what importance to thy infinite greatness are their distinctions of sects and parties? And how art thou concerned with the subtleties engendered by their folly?

"And you, credulous men, show me the efficacy of your practices! During the many ages that you have observed or altered them, what changes have your prescriptions wrought in the laws of nature? Has the sun shone with greater brilliancy? Has the course of seasons at all varied? Is the earth more fruitful? Are the people more happy?

"If God is good, how can he be pleased with your penances? If he is infinite, what can your homage add to his glory? Inconsistent men, answer these questions!"

Nature, which appears to be the god of the skeptic, unassisted by that "reason" which seems to be the talisman wherewith our author would cure all the diseases of the soul, does she not, in her most primitive state, bear witness against him? For the untutored savage would be tenfold more miserable than he is were he denied the privilege of doing "homage" to the glory of God; and would not "reason" alone teach civilized man that "penances," fasting, and prayer are acceptable to the Deity, even though it had never been commanded to men "that they should repent and

turn to God, and do works meet for repentance?" Skeptics, infidels, "inconsistent men, answer these questions!"

We will leave among his "Ruins" the philosopher, whose harp, like the Theban Memnon's, no longer attracts admiring crowds, nor lifts the vocal strain to the "God of the universe," that "God" to whom our own great Jehovah's servant said, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon."

I cannot, however, take leave of our eloquent infidel writer, now that I am about bidding adieu for ever to the wonders of Egypt, without wafting to you an echo from this "shatter'd Memnon's still harmonious strings." Listen!

"Solitary ruins, sacred tombs, ye mouldering and silent walls, all hail! to you I address my invocation. While the vulgar shrink from your aspect with secret terror, my heart finds in the contemplation a thousand delicious sentiments, a thousand admirable recollections. Pregnant, I may truly call you, with useful lessons, with pathetic and irresistible advice to the man who knows how to consult you.

"Tombs, what virtues and potency do you exhibit! Tyrants tremble at your aspect; you poison with secret alarm their impious pleasures; they turn from you with impatience, and, coward-like, endeavour to forget you amid the sumptuousness of their palaces. It is you who bring home the rod of justice to the powerful oppressor; it is you that wrest the ill-gotten gold from the merciless extortioner, and avenge the cause of him that has none to help; you compensate the narrow enjoyments of the poor by dashing with care the goblet of the rich; to the unfortunate you offer a last and inviolable asylum; in a word, you give to the soul that just equilibrium of strength and tenderness which constitutes the wisdom of the sage and science of life. The wise man looks towards you, and scorns to amass vain grandeur and useless riches, with which he must soon part; you check his flights, without disarming his adventure and his courage; he feels the necessity of passing through the period assigned

him, and he gives employment to his hours, and makes use of the goods that fortune has assigned him. Thus do you reign in the wild sallies of cupidity, calm the fever of tumultuous enjoyment, free the mind from the anarchy of the passions, and raise it above those little interests which torment the mass of mankind. We ascend the eminence you afford us, and, viewing with one glance the limits of nations and the succession of ages, are incapable of any affections but such as are sublime, and entertain no ideas but those of virtue and glory. Alas! when this uncertain dream of life shall be over, what then will all avail our busy passions, unless they have left behind them the footsteps of utility?"

May the "lessons" inculcated by these monuments produce a different effect upon my mind and heart than that which is developed in the pages succeeding this beautiful invocation of the deluded Volney! Among all the writers on infidelity, there is not one who comes before the world in so interesting and fascinating a garb as the author of the "Ruins of Empires;" and while one turns away in disgust from the low ribaldry of the many, and the bitter invectives of the rest, one is too apt to be caught by the plausible reasonings of Volney, clothed as they are in such chaste and beautiful language.

Alaric and Attila were satisfied with merely ruining temporal empires; but our great champion of infidelity has erected on such ruins a battery from whence he launches his thunders at the kingdom of Heaven: the former only imbrued their hands in the blood of nations, the latter would drive the souls of all mankind into eternal perdition. The outbreak of Gaul, the devastations she committed in the name of Liberty, under her imperial leader, and the "Ruins of Empires" that were strewed along his meteor track, were all as naught when compared with the moral ruin which was attempted to be imposed on the world by the civilian

conclave, who, from the banks of the Seine, hurled anathemas, not only against Christianity, but in the very face of the Deity himself. The ambitious usurper, Prometheus like, was chained to a rock, and his vitals consumed by the vultures of remorse; and the demons of the French Propaganda may share the fate of those angels who rebelled against high Heaven. * * * * * * *

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The next time I have the pleasure of addressing you I shall be somewhere in the Holy Land, perhaps at Jerusalem. Until that, to me, long-desired moment arrives, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

LETTER XXI.

The Kamseen.—Heliopolis.—Moses at College.—Assemblage of Nations.—Speculation in Death.—More Quarantine.

Beyrout (Syria), ——.

When I last wrote you from Cairo, I little thought that my next would be from a place so distant from the capital of Egypt. I did expect that the present would be dated from Jerusalem; but fate ordained that we were not to follow the track of the children of Israel out of Egypt to the Promised Land. In order to make you acquainted with the reasons which caused our change of route, it will be necessary for me to return with you to Cairo.

You recollect that, in my last, I mentioned to you that we were only waiting for Mustafa to return from the Delta with the large camel which he was to purchase for my accommodation. After waiting patiently for nearly a fortnight,

no Mustafa appeared, and, as the event proved, it was a happy circumstance for us that he was so long delayed. This is the season for the *Kamseen* (or fifty day) wind. This year it commenced blowing a few days earlier than usual, and the whole atmosphere was so filled with sand during the last three days of our stay in Cairo, that we could not venture outside of the city walls. Had we known of the necessity for a larger camel than the ordinary ones in use, we should have ordered one to be ready for us on our return from up the river, and then should have been off from Cairo in two or three days after. We should then have had time to pass over that part of the desert which we intended to cross, by way of Accaba and Petra, before the *Kamseen* began.

Had Mustafa returned during the first week after our arrival, we should have started immediately, and got caught by the Kamseen in the midst of the desert. Fortunately for us, as I said before, he was detained until the wind set in. Seeing the impossibility of venturing upon the desert short of fifty days, all of which time we would have been vegetating in Cairo, we came to the wise conclusion to descend the Nile again to Alexandria, and take the monthly steamer thence to this place. No vessels are allowed to touch at any other port in the Levant until they perform quarantine at this port, or we should have sailed for Jaffa, and thence gone directly to Jerusalem.

Since it has turned out thus, I must say that I am not sorry for having lost a fifteen days' camel ride merely to get a peep at the excavated rocks of Petra; for, after the caverned temples, tombs, and dwellings of the older Egypt, there is nothing at Petra worth the trouble it costs, except, perhaps, the curious natural defile leading to the valley in which the Roman city was built.

Until within a few years there was a charm about Idumea, and the world really believed in the literal fulfilment

of the prophecy respecting it, that none should pass through it "for ever and ever."

This charm was broken. Laborde remained in the valley of Petra for several weeks, and made accurate drawings of everything therein contained. Since which, several travellers have passed through and through the whole of Edom from south to north. Last year two English gentlemen went from Cairo, by way of Accaba and Petra, to Jerusalem, and our Giovanni was their dragoman. He informed us that they met with not the least difficulty in any respect from the Arabs. They had made suitable arrangements before leaving Cairo, the most important of which was to provide themselves with plenty of hard dollars, which, on the road, they dispensed liberally, both for their own advantage and that of those travellers who might come after them.

During the time we were last in Cario, we revisited many of the interesting objects within the city and in its environs. Among the latter, about twelve miles off, was the site of the ancient *Heliopolis*, the *On* of Scripture, where, long before the time of Moses, was a university, in which not only he, but many foreigners of distinction, were taught "all the wisdom of the Egyptians." The whole site of the city lies deep buried beneath the alluvial soil, deposited by the overflowings of the Nile. There is nothing now to be seen but the mounds that mark the line of wall which enclosed the area of the temple, the latter having entirely disappeared, its materials having been employed in the building of Alexandria. One single monumental stone marks the grave of the "City of the Sun;" it is a solitary obelisk, with its tall spire still pointing towards the same meridian course of the God of Day which it indicated four thousand years ago.

My visit to this now desolate spot awakened in me feelings which nothing I had yet seen in Egypt (or any other part of the world) had the power to arouse. What was it to me, individually, that I was within the very tomb of the

great Sesostris, or stood in the shade of the musical Memnon, where sat Cambyses the Destroyer, while his myrmidons were doing their worst upon the beautiful city? Among the ruins of Memphis there is nothing left whereby to fix the identity of any particular spot, of which one might say with certainty, here stood Moses, and there Aaron; while there sat the Pharaoh, surrounded by his court, beholding those miracles in which we are directly interested, inasmuch as they emanated from that God whom we now worship, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. But at Heliopolis, who can say that the great lawgiver, previous to his divine mission, while the years of his youth were being spent at this great fountain of knowledge, did not many a time and oft *recline against this same obelisk* (one of the most ancient now existing in all the land of Egypt); and, while his tutor priest of On was endeavouring to imbue his youthful mind with the subtile mysteries of his craft, the young Israelite was inwardly true to the religion of his fathers, and looked forward to that day when he should confound the wisest of his masters, and be the deliverer of the chosen people of God?

You may, perhaps, imagine the feelings with which I opened the books of the inspired writer while seated at the foot of this same obelisk; but it is impossible that you can realize the emotions which I felt on a spot so identified with the earliest history of our sacred scriptures. I read chapter after chapter, from that which records the arrival of the young Israelite slave in Egypt, to the exode of the subsequent great nation of God's peculiar people.

The heat of the midday sun compelled us to seek shelter in a grove near by. There, among orange and lemon trees in full bearing, we seated ourselves beside a copious spring of living water (the *only one* we had seen in all Egypt), the stream from which served to irrigate the whole of this Egyptian paradise. It was doubtless this delightful fount-

ain, and the groves which it nourished, that suggested the idea of this appropriate site for a secluded seat of learning. How often at this same fountain has Moses drunk? While the priests of Baal were engaged in their splendid mummeries at the shrine of their beastly god, is it not fair to presume that the chosen instrument of God's power and will often fled from the disgusting rites of the temple to the seclusion of this grove; shaking from his garments the profane incense of Saba, to inhale the delightful odours of this retired spot, while he bowed the knee to the only true God?

I am no enthusiast, nor do I desire to be skeptical, even in matters so unimportant as these; for it is delightful to be able to *believe*, while wandering among such authentic localities, and to give way to feelings which all the sophistry of the skeptic has not the power to subdue, in those whose hearts are open to conviction.

The juggling priestcraft of modern times seizes hold of every sacred locality, and invests it with a false glare of legendary lore, whereby to turn every trivial circumstance to its own immediate profit, and drive a lucrative bargain in relics among the ignorant and bigoted; thus putting weapons into the hands of the skeptic, and furnishing ample scope for the levity of the scoffer.

Tradition from the earliest times says, that at this same fountain and in this grove reposed the *holy family* on their first arrival in Egypt.

There is growing beside this copious spring a sycamore-tree of enormous size and extraordinary great age. The various monkish legends connected with this spot attribute to this tree the power of working miracles, and make it contemporary with the holy family. Independent of the certificate of the priesthood, it is not impossible, nor do I think it improbable, that this venerable relic of other ages was in existence at the birth of our Saviour.

In many parts of the world there are trees which date far

beyond that period; and if the accounts of naturalists of known veracity are to be depended on, there are trees in various parts of the world more than double the age assigned to the great sycamore of Heliopolis.

That Joseph and Mary, with the infant Jesus, reposed under this same tree, there is little room for doubt, and much to strengthen the belief that the holy family did halt beside this fountain when they first came into Egypt. When the "flight into Egypt" took place, it is not at all probable that Joseph went from Bethlehem down to the coast of Gaza, and from thence along the high road to Pelusium; for, by so doing, he would be exposing himself and his sacred charge to the vigilant police of Herod. It is most probable that he went directly south to Hebron, and thence by the caravan route across the desert to Suez, and from there to Memphis. By this route he would soon be out of the reach of pursuit; and the first point which the thirsty and way-worn traveller from Suez attains in the cultivated parts of Egypt is Heliopolis, with its refreshing fountain of living waters. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the venerable tradition is true, so far as it relates to the holy family having reposed beside the fountain, whether they came directly across the desert or by way of Pelusium; for the road from the latter place to Memphis skirted the edge of the desert, and On was one of the halting-places on the route. You may think that I have taken much unnecessary pains to establish the grounds for my belief in this tradition, and that it is of little moment whether or not the infant Saviour and his parents drank at this spring. To me, however, it is a source of much satisfaction to be able to believe, with some degree of reason, that I have quenched my thirst at the same fountain with the Saviour of mankind.

Our voyage down the Nile from Cairo was unattended with any circumstances or incidents worth noticing at this time. We landed for a short time to view the site of Sais,

the capital of Psammeticus, and found little to repay us for our trouble. Everything once belonging to this last capital of the native Pharaoh was carried to the new city of the Macedonian sovereigns.

Just as we were about leaving Alexandria, a large packet of letters was brought to us by a vessel from Smyrna, containing several letters from home. This was, indeed, a most fortunate and opportune arrival, for our last dates from home were then five months old.

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The hotel in Alexandria, which I described to you before as being in the midst of a garden of Oriental shrubbery, and which, on our first visit, we had exclusively to ourselves, presented, the last time we were there, an entirely different appearance. The steamer from India had lately arrived at Suez, full of passengers for England, most of whom were at the hotel waiting the arrival of the Malta steamer. Our salon had a projecting balcony or bay window, which commanded a view of all the front ground. From this point I think that for several days I enjoyed the most singular and unique combination of views I ever beheld in any part of the world, or perhaps shall ever see again. I will endeavour to describe it to you, if possible. First, then, the picture of *inanimate* objects or stage scenery, and afterward the *dramatis personæ*, or *tableau vivant*. Immediately under my window was the front court, perhaps 200 feet square, containing a number of palm and other trees, and surrounded by a high wall, into which were worked fragments of ancient Greek sculpture found in digging for the foundations of the hotel. Directly in front was a gateway, with the fragment of an ancient granite column on each side. Looking beyond the wall (for our salon was on the second floor), I had the whole range of the field of ruins before me; the Mount of the Temple of Serapis, the Napoleon Mount, the ruins of the Library and Cleopatra's Nee-

dle, with a boundless expanse of sea in the perspective. On my right hand, the Rosetta gate, and Abercrombie's battle-field beyond; on my left, the Moorish wall of the Saracen city, enclosing the modern Alexandria, with its double port and pharos; besides which, the marine villa of the modern Ptolemy, surrounded by the masts of his gigantic ships of war. The road from the city passed close to our hotel, and led to the great burying-fields around Pompey's Pillar. Added to all the above were groves of tall palm-trees in all directions, towering above which were the lofty forts, with heavy ordnance grinning through their embrasures. All beyond was sea, sea, to the shores of Asia Minor and Palestine.

These formed one of the most impressive pictures that my memory has retained since I left home; and one which, if it could be put on canvass by an able artist, would be worthy a place in any gallery. But the most unique of the whole was the animated part of it. First, there were the inmates of our hotel in various costumes. The gentlemen from India, in European dresses of all sorts of fashion, and their ladies in no fashion at all; then their Indian servants, of all colours, in Oriental dresses; the gentlemen sitting on the piazza, smoking their *houkas*, and their servants seated on the ground under the trees, puffing for a wager with the janizaries of the different consulates in attendance on the travellers during their temporary residence; besides which, Arab horses, donkeys, and their attendants thronging the gate. These Eastern travellers had with them various curious animals, which they were taking home to England, all of which were tied to the trees. Four giraffs, as many ostriches, and several other curious creatures which I do not now recollect, were continually stalking about the lawn, among the trees and groups of smokers. The giraffs and ostriches had lately arrived from Abyssinia, on their way to the Zoological Gardens of London.

The whole of these living creatures, biped and quadruped, were constantly in motion before me for several days, from early dawn to dark; besides which, beyond the walls of our domicil, the picture, though not quite so animated, was not less interesting on that account.

All over the field of ruins were groups of workmen excavating columns and marbles. Near to our wall I could see them throwing out the beautiful fragments of Grecian architecture and sculpture, and beyond them rose the columns and façade of a beautiful Christian church of the fourth century, just excavated. This being the sickly season, numbers of the lower orders were dying daily; and the plague, which had just commenced in a slight degree, added to the bills of mortality. Every one of the great numbers who went to his long home had to pass under our windows. I could see the processions as they emerged from the city, and, ere they got half across the plain between it and our hotel, I could hear the cries and "loud lament" of the numerous mourners. By the time they had arrived opposite to me I could observe the singular proceedings customary on these occasions. The corpse was laid in a close bier, having two long poles attached to it, by means of which it was carried on the shoulders of the friends of the deceased. It is customary for those who follow the corpse, and even accidental passers-by, to volunteer, or rather to take as a right, their turn to assist in bearing a fellow-mortal to his long home. On several occasions I observed the procession halt. Then they would put the bier upon the ground, and hold a consultation over it; and then, taking it up again, start off at a tangent from the direct route to the grave. Then some confusion would ensue, and another halt. They would retrace their steps back to the straight road, where they would endeavour to induce the dead man (to use their own words) to go quietly to the grave; failing in this, they would try another road. Finally, they would overcome the local

attachment of their deceased brother, and resume their direct line of march. By far the greater number of mourners, or rather screamers, were females, all clothed in blue cotton, with hoods over their heads, and a veil covering the upper part of their face, to which were attached strings of silver piastres by way of ornament. Speaking of inducing a dead man to go quietly to the grave reminds me of a singular custom in the East. When an individual has been noted during his life for exemplary piety, that is, scrupulous attention to the five daily prayers, kneeling down in all public places like the Pharisees of old, and being a constant attendant at the mosque, doing alms publicly, &c., he is marked as a "holy man." When he dies, some one of his friends sets about getting up a speculation for his own peculiar and pecuniary benefit, out of the stock of reputation previously gained by the good man. When the ceremony of burial takes place, this interested friend takes care that the deceased shall be very stubborn and contrary when he is about to be carried to the usual burying-ground. He manages so that all the roads but the one he has previously chosen himself shall be rejected by the defunct brother. At last the corpse consents to go a particular route, and, when arrived at some spot, well chosen beside a much-frequented highway, or canal, or a prominent situation on the river, he refuses to go a step farther, maugre all the coaxing and entreaties of his friends. This is considered as a warning or a notification from the holy man that this spot is the one where he desires to be buried, and it immediately becomes holy ground. He is there buried, and a subscription is raised to erect a tomb over him. This the interested friend takes care to have carried into execution. A small, square brick building, with a dome top, is erected, and neatly whitewashed. To the interior of this the pious friend removes all his goods and chattels, viz., a straw mat, a water-jar, and an earthenware pipkin. He buys a tin money-

can and a new rosary in the bazaar; and, thus equipped, repairs to his future home, the tomb of the "santon" (saint), where he commences his trade of licensed beggary. At all times he is heard rattling his tin can, containing a few piastres, and begging for more, to support the sanctity of the holy ground with the eclat due to the ashes of the saint therein buried. This is a thriving trade, and many a sleek and sturdy friar of this self-constituted order have I seen reaping the fruits of his zeal and piety along the borders of the Nile.

I am much inclined to think, from what I have seen, that there are brothers of a much higher order, in some Christian countries, who are not far behind these Oriental speculators in this kind of piety and zeal.

After this long digression, perhaps you will have forgotten my sketches from the hotel window. Be that as it may, I assure you that they are so indelibly engraven on the tablets of my memory, that no length of time could obliterate the faintest trace.

After enjoying for several days this unique *tableau*, the scene became doubly animated by the arrival of the Malta steamer, with another set of passengers, principally from England, and bound for India. They all came to our hotel. Then there was the interchange of news, letters, congratulations, and adieus; after which, a change in costume with certain classes. The half Turk, who had donned the coat, pantaloons, and Frank hat in England, now doffs them in favour of wide trousers and flowing gown. The renegado Christian in the service of the pacha puts off his count or captainship with his broadcloth Stultz, and puts on his *bey* or *effendi-ship* with his turban and sabre. The travelled half-Anglicized *Guebre* lays aside his dandy Bond-street suit and beaver, to come out in full Oriental costume, a gay embroidered Babylonish garment and gold filagree helmet.

Amid all this confusion, hurly-burly, and hurry, our ser-

vants had all our travelling effects packed away again on camels, and took up their line of march for the port, where the steamer was waiting to receive us.

On the morning of the third day out we saw a tall headland towering above the mist; this was "the top of Carmel." We did not approach near enough to make out any of its details; for, the moment it was descried, a new departure was taken by our pilot, who steered directly for the site of ancient Tyre. We then ran along the coast of old Phœnicia, with the Lebanon chain in the background.

So rapidly were we whirled along by the power of steam, and in such rapid succession came so many interesting objects, that, before I had fairly entered upon a train of associations connected with one, another was before me. First, *Carmel* of the Prophet, next came *Acre* of the Crusades, immediately after, old *Tyre*, and then her mother, *Sidon*.

In the course of three or four hours after we first descried Mount Carmel, we were at anchor in the port of the ancient Berytus, where we learned, to our very great satisfaction, that a quarantine of fourteen days awaited us for presuming to come from Egypt during the plague season.

The steamer, of course, must depart again immediately; we therefore have to do up our quarantine on shore.

To go to the horrible lazaretto, among regiments of sick troops and embargoed hadjees, was out of the question for us. By the kind intervention of our consul, Mr. Chasseaud, we were allowed to take a house without the town. I am now writing you from our prison; a pleasant one, however, it is; and, but for the fact of a compulsory residence in it, I should desire not to leave it for a month to come.

We occupy the upper or principal story of a country house, situated in the midst of a garden of mulberry-trees. A Syrian family occupy the basement, and are now in the midst of their silk harvest. We have a beautiful view of

the port, the surrounding country, and the snow-capped ridge of Lebanon behind us. Armed guards are placed over us, and we have received already two visits from the health officers.

We had nothing but the bare walls provided for us, and have to depend on our own resources for household conveniences and comforts.

The consul's janizary is our *compredor*, and he supplies us with whatever the market affords.

Although we are now fairly on the shores of the Levant, I cannot feel that I am yet in the "Holy Land," as all this section of country is improperly styled.

I cannot recognise any places as such except those which once were honoured by the personal appearance of our Saviour.

I must now leave you; and perhaps, the next time I commune with you, I may date from some part of that Holy Land which I so much desire to see. Until then, adieu.

LETTER XXII.

Pleasant Quarters.—Preliminary Arrangements.—An opportune Arrival.—The Release.—Missionaries.

Beyrout, ——.

We have now been eight days dwelling "in the tents of Shem," and our abode has been a much pleasanter one than even I at first anticipated; for, instead of a close confinement to our house and garden, we have been permitted to walk and ride over all parts of the neighbouring country, attended by an armed guard, that we might not come in contact with any of the natives, nor approach the town.

The house we occupy has, in common with all the country houses I have as yet seen in the Levant, a terraced roof, at one end of which is a room enclosed only on three sides, with the fourth entirely open towards the terrace. To this apartment the family retires during the heat of the day, or when a shower obliges them to seek a shelter. On each side of the open apartment is a sleeping room, so that the family may be said to live on the roof of the house, while the offices for the servants are on the ground floor. Although, at the moment of my present writing, it is high noon, and the sun is pouring down his fiercest beams, yet the apartment which I occupy being entirely open towards the sea, with windows at the opposite side, there is a delightful current of air drawing through it, which explains to me the object of these aerial accommodations. A wall about three feet high extends along the front of the terrace, but does not interrupt the view from the sitting apartment, the latter being raised two steps above the terrace. From my divan I have a fine view of the roadstead (for there is no harbour), where about two hundred sail of vessels of all kinds, from two hundred tons down to the felucca of ten, are riding at anchor. Now, while the strong breeze is coming in, the swell rises, and every vessel is rolling her gunwales under water, and seems to me as if she were dancing a hornpipe to the music of the breakers. Their yards assume every imaginable angle, and their topmasts describe a thousand confused curves against the bright western sky-line. At sundown the sea-breeze ceases and the land-wind rises, when the water near shore becomes as smooth as a mirror; every vessel is then as immoveable as though she were on land, and her mast as steady as the trees of the forest on a calm summer eve.

We are fortunately favoured with moonlight evenings during our detention. It is delightful to sit upon the terrace and enjoy the bland zephyrs from the Syrian desert, tem-

pered in their seaward course by the snowy peaks of Lebanon, which are full in sight, with the dancing moonbeams playing round their frozen summits. The only evening sounds we hear are the merry notes of the mariners, while they are weighing anchor for home, and letting fall the flowing sheet to the eastern breeze.

Every hour during the day numerous white specks are seen in the western horizon, which, gradually rising over the top of the waves, denote a fleet of inward-bound vessels from every quarter of the world except America. I understand that our traders have not yet found their way hither, content to terminate their Oriental voyages at the city of figs and raisins. You have read *Lamartine*, of course. The house wherein he passed his quarantine, and where he lost his beautiful little daughter, is near to us, in an adjoining garden. The inhabitants here speak in the highest terms of him and his lady, and remember them with much gratitude for their liberality and kindness.

To-morrow will be the ninth day of our quarantine, when we expect a scene; for we are determined to follow the example set by the English and Russian consuls of Egypt, and break quarantine in despite of bayonets and bullets, for the season is getting late, and we must be off. These gentlemen on the ninth day walked out of durance vile in despite of the governor and his guards. We have notified his highness, through our consul, that we intend to do the same; and it is possible that he may resist; yet we are told that, if we show our colours and assert our liberty, *vi et armis*, he will probably give way, as in the former cases. *Mais nous verrons.*

The gentlemen several days since had an interview with the chief of the Lebanon muleteers, or *moukres*, as they are called; and it is only this evening that he has been enabled to complete the number of horses and mules which we shall require for our caravan. The poor fellows dare not ap-

proach the coast with their animals, for fear of the army contractors, who press them into the government service for little or no pay, to transport provisions to the army of Ibrahim in the interior. We therefore have to get a protection from our consul and a permit from the governor before our horses can make their appearance near the city.

We have bargained with one principal moukre to officiate as leader and pilot through the country, for a given sum per diem for each animal, to furnish the requisite number on starting, and to keep it complete as long as we may desire, and to go wherever we choose; each day's journey to be regulated by circumstances and our own will. We have arranged for twenty animals of different kinds, horses for the saddle and mules for burden, and are to pay three quarters of a dollar each per day, the moukre to supply them with keep and drivers. We shall set out as soon as we get *pratique*, and have paid our respects to the family of the worthy consul, and those of the missionary residents from our own country, who have all paid us a visit in our pleasant quarters. * * * * *

Since writing the above we have had an important and very opportune arrival, both for ourselves and the old governor, who this day might otherwise have been belligerants.

The Governor of Acre arrived here from the seat of war on his way home. We had letters to him, and, by his timely interference in our behalf, at the instance of our consul, our quarantine was peaceably terminated yesterday.

As soon as we had received the visit of inspection from the health officer, and been pronounced by him sound and healthy, we were permitted to take our friends by the hand. Our first visit was to our worthy consul, Mr. Chasseaud and his amiable lady. Mr. C. is a Greek from Salonica, and his lady is from France. Mr. C. some years since accompanied throughout the East our countryman, Mr. L. Bradish. We found the town of Beyrout a wretched place, with no one thing in it worth noticing.

The resident missionaries are delightfully situated in a fine house, surrounded by a garden, a short distance from the town. We dined with them and visited their school. Mr. Smith is, no doubt, one of the best qualified persons for this important service throughout all the East; his amiable and indefatigable companion is making herself extremely useful by teaching a school of small children. All her books and exercises are in the Arabic language.

We are all ready to set out on our caravan expedition, and are only waiting for our horses to be saddled and the mules to be loaded. While the gentlemen are engaged in making their final arrangements, I take the opportunity to finish this hasty epistle, begun yesterday.

I can scarcely realize that it is probable I shall not sleep under a roof again for several months, and that our house, furniture, beds, wardrobe, kitchen, and provisions are all to be carried on horseback. That we must take up our every night's abode wheresoever we may chance to find water, whether the sun be high or low, or whether we may have been six or sixteen hours on the road. I have, however, no misgivings about my present undertaking, being blessed with high health and spirits; besides, the long journeys I have made for the last two years have rendered almost any amount of bodily fatigue but a mere pastime to me. We are also amply provided with everything calculated to make our journey comfortable; and such are the arrangements made by the gentlemen, in whose *savoir faire* I have perfect confidence, that the prospect before me is delightful, although there are some uncertainties, which tend to impart a zest to the undertaking, rather than excite much apprehension.

I am already summoned to mount; but, instead of having been occupied in assuming my equestrian attire, I have been scribbling to you the while. *N'importe*, I have become accustomed to these sudden demands upon me, yet have, withal, such indulgent masters, that they consult my time

rather than their own; and I, who should, under circumstances like the present, obey, am generally called on to command. My convenience and comfort appear to be the rules which govern all their movements.

Enfin—I will no longer impose upon the patience of those who are so kindly waiting for me, nor tax yours any more at this time; so adieu.

LETTER XXIII.

Life in a Tent.—Travelling Equipments.—An Oriental Caleb Quotem.—A travelling Maitre d'Hotel.—An Arab Page.—The Commissary Department.—Preparations completed.

Sidon, ——.

Although I now date from the mother of cities, yet we are encamped at some distance from it. Our early halt this afternoon permits me to address you again sooner than I anticipated. The novelty of my present situation is such that I can with difficulty abstract myself from the curious scene around me, and I am fearful that I shall not be able at this time to indite anything instructing or amusing to you.

Perhaps, however, a few remarks on our *caravan* arrangements and mode of travelling would be the most suitable introduction to my tour in the Holy Land, and one which might have some interest for you. I wish, first, that you could take a peep through the side of our tent, and see me sitting *à la Turc* upon a low divan, which is no other than my mattress laid upon the ground, with a Persian rug thrown over it; in front of me a canteen box, serving as a field table, on which is spread my portfolio, with my maps and books lying about on the carpet. Well! we have now fairly set up for ourselves; and, from the small specimen I

have already had of this mode of travelling, I am certain that I shall like it. One is so independent, and free from restraint, and from any care as to when or where the day's journey is to end, provided always that *water* is to be had.

I will endeavour to give you a general idea of our caravan and its constituent parts. A full detail of the thousand and one items which go towards making the sum total of our necessaries, comforts, and luxuries, would at this time be out of place; yet in practice, were the least one omitted, the want of it would be felt, and its absence a serious inconvenience. First, then, there is our locomotive house. The tent which we had made at Cairo is similar to a campaigning marquee of the first class. It is circular, and about twenty feet in diameter, and fourteen high. It has a bell-shaped top, coming down from the centre pole to the perpendicular side walls, which are six feet high. It is composed of three thicknesses of cloth. The outside is a strong white sailcloth; the inside is of printed cotton, of different patterns and colours, in alternate stripes. The interlining is of white India cotton. The roof or bell top is supported by a long centre pole, and the side walls have shorter ones, at each seam of the cloth. When the tent is to be pitched, a site is first chosen free from briers and stones; or, if none such is to be found, one is soon cleared with a small rake carried for that purpose. The next operation is to spread the under carpet, which is made of coarse camels' hair, and very thick. Through a hole in the centre the tent-pole is placed in the ground. The roof part of the tent is placed on the top of the pole, and the whole is raised by main strength, and there held while one person goes to windward with a strong cord, which is fastened to a wooden pin driven in the ground. After which, there are about a dozen other cords, which follow the seams or gores of the bell top, and which are stretched out, forming radii twenty feet in every direction from the edge of the

canvass. It now has precisely the appearance of a huge umbrella, kept erect on the ground by cords from its extremities.

The walls or sides are then unrolled, and attached to the lower edge of the roof by loops and buttons. On one side, a fly curtain covers the entrance. The house being now built, roof, walls, and floor, the latter is covered with Persian rugs: the furniture is next brought in. The first thing done is to take from their respective sacks the mattresses, which are arranged around the sides of the tent opposite the door, and over them Persian rugs are thrown: these are now divans. The portmanteaux are next placed at the head of each divan, forming a rest for the arm. Two canteen boxes are placed in the centre of the tent for a table. Our saddles and arms are next brought in. The former occupy the space near the door, and the latter are placed under our pillows. After the evening or principal meal is over, and an hour or two spent in reading or writing, the night arrangements are made, by dividing the tent into two apartments by a partition wall made expressly for such occasions.

The European servants have a small campaigning tent, which they pitch for themselves when they are not too lazy. The Arabs always lie out. After we have retired, our body servants lie close around the tent; outside of them lie the Arabs; and the outer circle is formed of horses and mules, tied to pickets driven in the ground. The whole operation of pitching the tent and arranging the interior requires no more time than it has for me to describe it to you; much less the striking the same in the morning, when each separate part of the tent is placed in a strong haircloth sack, forming a load for two mules.

As you are to follow me through all the varied scenes of this Bedouin life, you no doubt would like to know if, in addition to shelter, we have *de quoi vivre*. Our commissary

department would afford you some amusement were you to take a peep into it. First, however, let me introduce you to the *personnel* of our expedition, and then afterward to the *materiel*. The three travellers you ought to be pretty well acquainted with by this time. Pass on, then, to the next prominent individuals. First, there is Signor Giovanni, who serves in the various capacities of dragoman, janizary, *chef de batallion*, bully, and scarecrow, and could, no doubt, do at a pinch for *bravo*. This fellow speaks *eleven* languages, viz., Russian, Siberian, Hungarian, Polish, Wallachian, German, Turkish, Arabic, Greek, Italian, and French! all sufficiently well for ordinary business matters. He is quite a Caleb Quotem; can cook, wash, shave, dress hair, (all *caravan* fashion); can smile, cringe, bully, or fight, as circumstances may require; "in short, he is *factotum*." He is so singular a being that I must give you a page of his history. Born an Austrian subject in Transylvania, he in early life went to Russia, where, in course of time, he became attached to the cavalry, and was at the hacking and hewing affair of the Balkan, along with Diebeitsch, where his strong hand helped many a turbaned Turk into Paradise before his natural time. From having had many encounters with the Osmanlies, his thirst for blood is so great, that he never sees a turban but his trusty broadsword is ready to fly out of its scabbard on the most trivial occasion; and, but for the continual restraint he is kept in, he would be getting himself and us into awkward scrapes. His long four-foot janizary cane is his favourite plaything, with which he amuses himself by playing "*carte and tierce*" at the heads of the lazy Arabs, in order to keep his military hand from losing its cunning.

When war's alarms had ceased between the Turk and Muscovite, Giovanni betook himself to Stamboul, to seek his fortune among the thousand adventurers like himself who flock there from all parts of the world. Before he had time to select a peaceable pursuit, he saw the ascendant star

of Ibrahim rising over the Taurus. Little matter was it to him on which side he fought, so that hard knocks were the outlay and harder money the income. His Russian pay now having all slipped from his pockets into the turbans of the various Caffigees and Keebobjees of Pera, poor Giovanni was forced to lay aside his cockade and swaggering tone, and 'list as a travelling valet to some Europeans going to Egypt. Arrived in that country, his first step to promotion was from the service of a private gentleman to that of a naval officer on board the fleet. I mention these epochs in the checkered life of our hero, in order to explain where and how, unlettered as he is, he has picked up a thorough colloquial knowledge of so many languages; in an army composed of so many nations, subject to, or in alliance with, Russia; in the Egyptian navy, with Arab sailors, French and Italian officers, and in the service of foreign travellers. Before he leaves us he will have learned to speak English. This facility of tongue comes from his native Sclavonic dialect, one of the most difficult of all living languages to pronounce. He is our *Compredor* and *Spendidor*, and his accounts are kept by his own method of "Italian book-keeping," that would puzzle our professor Bennet. Such hieroglyphics! when he lays his weekly accounts before the gentlemen, for "*ove, legumi, dozzini di polastri, okkas di carne, et di tanti altri cose*," the *columns* and *echellons* of marks and ciphers, representing each time so many piastres and paras, that the exchequer of the gentlemen feels the effect of his invasions. Their *zechini* and *colonnades* are fast swept away by his heavy *charges*.

He is so useful to us that we could not part with him if we would. We should get another equally roguish, and not half so *accomplished* in other matters.

This meteor of dragomen crossed our orbit in the latitude of Odessa last December, and, attracted by the strong-box which Frank travellers are supposed always to carry with them, he has ever since continued to revolve about

ours like a faithful satellite round its sun. I have dwelt longer on the merits of this worthy than you may now suppose necessary; but I have no doubt that ere we get through with him, he will be found to be worth his weight in gold to us; besides, what Quixote but has his Sancho Panza to play off upon in the history of his adventures?

A personage equally clever in other respects, and quite as essential to our comfort, is Monsieur François. This dapper little Marseillois is as polite and respectful as the other is *brusque* and boorish. If he did not graduate in the school of Ude, still his talents in the culinary art have been somewhere improved to such a degree that their effects are *sensibly* felt by us whenever we have occasion for them.

He was a long time *chef* to some French admiral. When we were fitting out our brig at Smyrna last winter, being in want of a cook, we found monsieur assisting about our hotel; and, putting his *savoir faire* to the test for some days, we discovered that he was just our man; so we engaged him. One would think he had been *chef* at one of the first-rate restaurants of Paris, such is the extent of his powers in the higher branches of the science. His Egyptian tour has added much to his previous accomplishments; his *poulet à la Carnac*, and *pigeon à la Memnon*, are rare inventions, as well as his *Marmalade Alexandrine* and *Pyramides à la Memphis*. Although he frequently has many high scenes with Giovanni for coming in so late from foraging excursions, thereby delaying dinner, yet I think his travels have taught him too much philosophy to admit of his drowning himself, as did the *chef* of the great Bourbon when the fish arrived too late to be cooked for his royal master's table.

However vulgar it may be thought with you to permit this gastronomic department to occupy much of one's attention, yet, after twelve hours' ride on horseback, I am of opinion that you would not despise the productions of our *artiste*; nay, even without such *sauce piquante*, I am certain

you would appreciate his *hors d'œuvres* as well as his *chef d'œuvres*.

The old saying, "better pay two cooks than one doctor," is particularly applicable here, where the latter are not to be found.

Query, why are the cooks on shipboard styled "Doctor?"

Next in order comes *Selim*, an Arab boy, who serves me in the capacity of page, running beside my horse to pick up my whip, a flower, or a plant. He holds my stirrup for me to mount and dismount. He was confided to my care by his mother at Cairo, and I intend to take him home with me, unless he gets spoiled by Giovanni before we have done with him. He speaks Arabic, Italian, and French; the last two acquired when in the service of some Europeans on the Nile. The wonderful facility of the Arabs for acquiring foreign languages is exemplified in this boy of thirteen; besides the above, he begins already to understand and speak a little English, and is practising in Greek with Giovanni, in anticipation of his visit to the shores of Attica. These form the first of the three divisions of servitors in our train. Each of them has an *adjunct* of his own selection from among the others. Giovanni has already drilled into his own particular service an Arab muleteer to do his chores, among which are, carrying his pipe, holding his horse, and bearing a backload of poultry, fish, and vegetables, when he visits the bazars in his capacity of purveyor. Monsieur has his hewer of wood and drawer of water, on whom he bestows his cheese-parings and other delicacies in requital for this extra service.

Selim has learned to affect the *Howaja*, and must needs have *his* pipebearer among the muleteer boys. For the present I shall say nothing of Abdallah, our chief moukre, his lieutenant, or the half dozen subalterns in their employ.

You inquire, where is my maid; where is Pauline? My answer is, that I have long since learned how much better

I can get on without such *baggage* as additional encumbrance; for such work as this, no European female servant is worth the trouble she causes, and I have dispensed with mine long ago.

Have patience a little while, and we will soon get among objects of some interest. I am aware you wish to visit *Sidon;* but I am not quite through yet with my family matters. We will now inspect the commissary department, and see what things are required for a comfortable journey through a barbarous land. Here, then, are canteen-boxes Nos. 1, 2, and 3, containing over-land tea bought at Moscow; Mocha coffee from the pacha's magazine at Cairo; loaves of English sugar, and cheese from the same country; vermicelli, maccaroni, rice, biscuit (the latter having gone from England to India, and thence to Egypt, where a traveller having no farther use for it, it entered our service as a *corps de reserve*), flour, arrow-root, tongues, hams, English potatoes (none raised in the East), almonds, raisins, figs, nuts, confectionaries, spices, salt, tobacco, &c., &c., &c. Boxes Nos. 4 to 6, inclusive, contain wines, liqueurs, sirups, porter, ale, and vinegar, English sauces and pickles, oranges, lemons, and a score of little nameless things put in by our sailor cook to make good stowage. Another box contains our dinner and tea sets, all disposed in a manner to prevent breakage.

Another box contains our Russian tea urn in one division, and in the other table cloths, napkins, &c. Box 9 is our *cuisine portatif*, with everything necessary for preparing a dinner for six persons. Another box contains lanterns, wax candles, soap, wash basins, &c. Another has in it our travelling library; another, maps, charts, instruments, writing materials, and portfolios. There is another containing specimens of minerals, and my herbarium, besides the gentlemen's ammunition. Another box contains our medicine chest and other articles, to serve in case of sickness or accident; also dressing cases, boxes of Cologne, *vinaigre des*

quatre voleurs, a preventive against plague and fevers. Besides the above dozen or more cases, there are divers sacks, containing extra bridles, ropes, straps, twine, wrapping, paper, water-skins, tent-pins, charcoal, &c. Two of the above boxes form a load for one mule, with a few light articles added.

After observing the meager display of comestibles in the bazar of the emporium of these countries, Beyrout, my attention was immediately directed to our own internal resources; and the above catalogue, handed me by the gentlemen, was the result of my inquiries into these matters. Judging from the quantity and quality of these stores, the *physique* will be so well provided for (thanks to the superlative forethought of the experienced traveller, Mr. R.), that the *morale* only will require our future attention.

You will no doubt think (from the above details) that we are travelling in the true *Arungzebee* style, and that I am making a progress in the Holy Land *à la sultana*, or like another *Helena*. No such thing; for we have nothing but what is necessary to a traveller on a mere tour of pleasure, and particularly where there is a lady in question.

Perhaps one day or other you may travel in the East, when the foregoing memorandum will come quite apropos, along with others I may give you.

The above must suffice for this evening, for the hour has come for our *scriptural* lecture. Mr. R.'s text to night is in Genesis xlix., verse 13. "Zebulon shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for a haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon."

I shall have time enough to-morrow morning, before we get *en route*, to add a few lines concerning our journey from Beyrout to this place, and our visit this day to Sidon. In the mean while, I bid you good-night.

END OF VOL. I.

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